The real dope

Ring Lardner

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THE REAL DOPE

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Well, Al, just as this was coming off her old man come at me

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THE REAL DOPE

By

RING W. LARDNER

AUTHOR OF

GULLIBLE'S TRAVELS, MY FOUR WEEKS IN FRANCE
TREAT 'EM ROUGH, ETC.

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CHAPTER I

AND MANY A STORMY WIND SHALL BLOW

On the Ship Board, Jan. 15.

FRIEND AL: Well Al I suppose it is kind of foolish to be writeing you a letter now when they won't be no chance to mail it till we get across the old pond but still and all a man has got to do something to keep themself busy and I know you will be glad to hear all about our trip so I might as well write you a letter when ever I get a chance and I can mail them to you all at once when we get across the old pond and you will think I have wrote a book or something.

Jokeing a side Al you are lucky to have an old pal thats going to see all the fun and write to you about it because its a different thing haveing a person write to you about what they see themself then getting the dope out of a newspaper or something because you will know that what I tell you is the real dope that I seen myself where if you read it in a newspaper you know its guest work because

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in the 1st. place they don't leave the reporters get nowheres near the front and besides that they wouldn't go there if they had a leave because they would be to scared like the baseball reporters that sets a mile from the game because they haven't got the nerve to get down on the field where a man could take a punch at them and even when they are a mile away with a screen in front of them they duck when somebody hits a pop foul.

Well Al it is against the rules to tell you when we left the old U. S. or where we come away from because the pro German spy might get a hold of a man's letter some way and then it would be good night because he would send a telegram to where the submarines is located at and they wouldn't send no 1 or 2 submarines after us but the whole German navy would get after us because they would figure that if they ever got us it would be a rich hall. When I say that Al I don't mean it to sound like I was swell headed or something and I don't mean it would be a rich hall because I am on board or nothing like that but you would know what I am getting at if you seen the bunch we are takeing across.

In the 1st. place Al this is a different kind of a trip then the time I went around the world with the 2 ball clubs because then it was just the 1 boat load and only for two or 3 of the boys on board it wouldn't of made no difference if the boat had of

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turned a turtle only to pave the whole bottom of the ocean with ivory. But this time Al we have got not only 1 boat load but we got four boat loads of soldiers alone and that is not all we have got. All together Al there is 10 boats in the parade and 6 of them is what they call the convoys and that means war ships that goes along to see that we get there safe on acct. of the submarines and four of them is what they call destroyers and they are little bits of shafers but they say they can go like he—ll when they get started and when a submarine pops up these little birds chases right after them and drops a death bomb on to them and if it ever hits them the capt. of the submarine can pick up what is left of his boat and stick a 2 cent stamp on it and mail it to the kaiser.

Jokeing a side I guess they's no chance of a submarine getting fat off of us as long as these little birds is on watch so I don't see why a man shouldn't come right out and say when we left and from where we come from but if they didn't have some kind of rules they's a lot of guys that wouldn't know no better then write to Van Hinburg or somebody and tell them all they know but I guess at that they could use a post card.

Well Al we been at sea just two days and a lot of the boys has gave up the ghost all ready and pretty near everything else but I haven't felt the least bit sick that is sea sick but I will own up I felt

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a little home sick just as we come out of the harbor and seen the godess of liberty standing up there maybe for the last time but don't think for a minute Al that I am sorry I come and I only wish we was over there all ready and could get in to it and the only kick I got comeing so far is that we haven't got no further then we are now on acct. that we didn't do nothing the 1st. day only stall around like we was waiting for Connie Mack to waggle his score card or something.

But we will get there some time and when we do you can bet we will show them something and I am tickled to death I am going and if I lay down my life I will feel like it wasn't throwed away for nothing like you would die of tyford fever or something.

Well I would of liked to of had Florrie and little Al come east and see me off but Florrie felt like she couldn't afford to spend the money to make another long trip after making one long trip down to Texas and besides we wasn't even supposed to tell our family where we was going to sail from but I notice they was a lot of women folks right down to the dock to bid us good by and I suppose they just guessed what was comeing off eh Al? Or maybe they was all strangers that just happened to be there but I'll say I never seen so much kissing between strangers. Any way I and my family had our farewells out west and Florrie was got up like

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a fancy dress ball and I suppose if I die where she can tend the funeral she will come in pink tights or something.

Well Al I better not keep on talking about Florrie and little Al or I will do the baby act and any way its pretty near time for chow but I suppose you will wonder what am I talking about when I say chow. Well Al that's the name we boys got up down to Camp Grant for stuff to eat and when we talk about food instead of saying food we say chow so that's what I am getting at when I say its pretty near time for chow. Your pal,

JACK.

On the Ship Board, Jan. 17.

FRIEND AL: Well Al here we are out somewheres in the middle of the old pond and I wished the trip was over not because I have been sea sick or anything but I can't hardly wait to get over there and get in to it and besides they got us jammed in like a sardine or something and four of us in 1 state room and I don't mind doubleing up with some good pal but a man can't get no rest when they's four trying to sleep in a room that wouldn't be big enough for Nemo Liebold but I wouldn't make no holler at that if they had of left us pick our own roomys but out of the four of us they's one that looks like he must of bribed the

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jury or he wouldn't be here and his name is Smith and another one's name is Sam Hall and he has always got a grouch on and the other boy is O. K. only I would like him a whole lot better if he was about ½ his size but no he is as big as me only not put up like I am. His name is Lee and he pulls a lot of funny stuff like this A. M. he says they must of thought us four was a male quartette and they stuck us all in together so as we could get some close harmony. That's what they call it when they hit them minors.

Well Al I always been use to sleeping with my feet in bed with me but you can't do that in the bunk I have got because your knee would crack you in the jaw and knock you out and even if they was room to strech Hall keeps crabbing till you can't rest and he keeps the room filled up with cigarette smoke and no air and you can't open up the port hole or you would freeze to death so about the only chance I get to sleep is up in the parlor in a chair in the day time and you don't no sooner set down when they got a life boat drill or something and for some reason another they have a role call every day and that means everybody has got to answer to their name to see if we are all on board just as if they was any other place to go.

When they give the signal for a life boat drill everybody has got to stick their life belt on and go to the boat where they have been given the number

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of it and even when everybody knows its a fake you got to show up just the same and yesterday they was one bird thats supposed to go in our life boat and he was sea sick and he didn't show up so they went after him and one of the officers told him that wasn't no excuse and what would he do if he was sea sick and the ship was realy sinking and he says he thought it was realy sinking ever since we started.

Well Al we got some crowd on the boat and they's two French officers along with us that been giveing drills and etc. in one of the camps in the U. S. and navy officers and gunners and a man would almost wish something would happen because I bet we would put up some battle.

Lee just come in and asked me who was I writeing to and I told him and he says I better be careful to not write nothing against anybody on the trip just as if I would. But any way I asked him why not and he says because all the mail would be opened and read by the censor so I said "Yes but he won't see this because I won't mail it till we get across the old pond and then I will mail all my letters at once."

So he said a man can't do it that way because just before we hit land the censor will take all our mail off of us and read it and cut out whatever he don't like and then mail it himself. So I didn't know we had a censor along with us but Lee says

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we certainly have got one and he is up in the front ship and they call that the censor ship on acct. of him being on there.

Well Al I don't care what he reads and what he don't read because I am not the kind that spill anything about the trip that would hurt anybody or get them in bad. So he is welcome to read anything I write you might say.

This front ship is the slowest one of the whole four and how is that for fine judgment Al to put the slowest one ahead and this ship we are on is the fastest and they keep us behind instead of leaving us go up ahead and set the pace for them and no wonder we never get nowheres. Of course that ain't the censor's fault but if the old U. S. is in such a hurry to get men across the pond I should think they would use some judgment and its just like as if Hughey Jennings would stick Oscar Stanage or somebody ahead of Cobb in the batting order so as Cobb couldn't make to many bases on a hit.

Well Al I will have to cut it out for now because its pretty near time for chow and that's the name we got up out to Camp Grant for meals and now everybody in the army when they talk about food they call it chow. Your pal,

JACK.

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On the Ship Board, Jan. 19.

FRIEND AL: Well Al they have got a new nickname for me and now they call me Jack Tar and Bob Lee got it up and I will tell you how it come off. Last night was one rough bird and I guess pretty near everybody on the boat were sick and Lee says to me how was it that I stood the rough weather so good and it didn't seem to effect me so I says it was probably on acct. of me going around the world that time with the two ball clubs and I was right at home on the water so he says "I guess we better call you Jack Tar."

So that's how they come to call me Jack Tar and its a name they got for old sailors that's been all their life on the water. So on acct. of my name being Jack it fits in pretty good.

Well a man can't help from feeling sorry for the boys that have not been across the old pond before and can't stand a little rough spell but it makes a man kind of proud to think the rough weather don't effect you when pretty near everybody else feels like a churn or something the minute a drop of water splashes vs. the side of the boat but still a man can't hardly help from laughing when they look at them.

Lee says he would of thought I would of enlisted in the navy on acct. of being such a good sailor. Well I would of Al if I had knew they needed men

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and I told Lee so and he said he thought the U. S. made a big mistake keeping it a secret that they did need men in the navy till all the good ones enlisted in the draft and then of course the navy had to take what they could get.

Well I guess I all ready told you that one of the boys in our room is named Freddie Smith and he don't never say a word and I thought at 1st. it was because he was a kind of a bum like Hall that didn't know nothing and that's why he didn't say it but it seems the reason he don't talk more is because he can't talk English very good but he is a Frenchman and he was a waiter in the big French resturent in Milwaukee and now what do you think Al he is going to learn Lee and I French lessons and Lee fixed it up with him. We want to learn how to talk a little so when we get there we can make ourself understood and you remember I started studing French out to Camp Grant but the man down there didn't know nothing about what he was talking about so I walked out on him but this bird won't try and learn us grammer or how you spell it or nothing like that but just a few words so as we can order drinks and meals and etc. when we get a leave off some time. Tonight we are going to have our 1st. lesson and with a man like he to learn us we ought to pick it up quick.

Well old pal I will wind up for this time as I don't feel very good on acct. of something I eat

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this noon and its a wonder a man can keep up at all where they got you in a stateroom jammed in like a sardine or something and Hall smokeing all the while like he was a freight engine pulling a freight train up grade or something.

Your pal, JACK.

On the Ship Board, Jan. 20.

FRIEND AL: Just a line Al because I don't feel like writeing as I was taken sick last night from something I eat and who wouldn't be sick jammed in a room like a sardine.

I had a kind of a run in with Hall because he tried to kid me about being sick with some of his funny stuff but I told him where to head in. He started out by saying to Lee that Jack Tar looked like somebody had knocked the tar out of him and after a while he says "What's the matter with the old salt tonight he don't seem to have no pepper with him." So I told him to shut up.

Well we didn't have no French lesson on acct. of me being taken sick but we are going to have a lesson tonight and pretty soon I am going up and try and eat something and I hope they don't try and hand me no more of that canned beans or whatever it was that effected me and if Uncle Sam wants his boys to go over there and put up a battle he shouldn't try and poison them first.

Your pal, JACK.

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On the Ship Board, Jan. 21.

FRIEND AL: Well Al I was talking to one of the sailors named Doran to-day and he says in a day or 2 more we would be right in the danger zone where all the subs hangs out and then would come the fun and we would probably all have to keep our clothes on all night and keep our life belts on and I asked him if they was much danger with all them convoys guarding us and he says the subs might fire a periscope right between two of the convoys and hit our ship and maybe the convoys might get them afterwards but then it would be to late.

He said the last time he come over with troops they was two subs got after this ship and they shot two periscopes at this ship and just missed it and they seem to be laying for this ship because its one of the biggest and fastest the U. S. has got.

Well I told Doran it wouldn't bother me to keep my clothes on all night because I all ready been keeping them on all night because when you have got a state room like ours they's only one place where they's room for a man's clothes and that's on you.

Well old pal they's a whole lot of difference between learning something from somebody that knows what they are talking about and visa versa. I and Lee and Smith got together in the room last night and we wasn't at it more than an hour but

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I learned more then all the time I took lessons from that 4 flusher out to Camp Grant because Smith don't waist no time with a lot of junk about grammer but I or Lee would ask him what was the French for so and so and he would tell us and we would write it down and say it over till we had it down pat and I bet we could pretty near order a meal now without no help from some of these smart alex that claims they can talk all the languages in the world.

In the 1st. place they's a whole lot of words in French that they's no difference you might say between them from the way we say it like beef steak and beer because Lee asked him if suppose we went in somewheres and wanted a steak and bread and butter and beer and the French for and is und so we would say beef steak und brot mit butter schmieren und bier and that's all they is to it and I can say that without looking at the paper where we wrote it down and you can see I have got that much learned all ready so I wouldn't starve and when you want to call a waiter you call him kellner so you see I could go in a place in Paris and call a waiter and get everything I wanted. Well Al I bet nobody ever learned that much in 1 hour off that bird out to Camp Grant and I'll say its some speed.

We are going to have another lesson tonight but Lee says we don't want to try and learn to much

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at once or we will forget what we all ready learned and they's a good deal to that Al.

Well Al its time for chow again so lebe wohl and that's the same like good by in French.

Your pal,

JACK.

On the Ship Board, Jan. 22.

FRIEND AL: Well Al we are in what they call the danger zone and they's some excitement these days and at night to because they don't many of the boys go to sleep nights and they go to their rooms and pretend like they are going to sleep but I bet you wouldn't need no alarm clock to make them jump out of bed.

Most of the boys stays out on deck most of the time and I been staying out there myself most all day today not because I am scared of anything because I always figure if its going to happen its going to happen but I stay out because it ain't near as cold as it was and besides if something is comeing off I don't want to miss it. Besides maybe I could help out some way if something did happen.

Last night we was all out on deck in the dark talking about this and that and one of the boys I was standing along side of him made the remark that we had been out nine days and he didn't see no France yet or no signs of getting there so I said

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no wonder when we had such a he—ll of a censor ship and some other guy heard me say it so he said I better not talk like that but I didn't mean it like that but only how slow it was.

Well we are getting along O. K. with the French lessons and Bob Lee told me last night that he run across one of the two French officers that's on the ship and he thought he would try some of his French on him so he said something about it being a nice day in French and the Frenchman was tickled to death and smiled and bowed at him and I guess I will try it out on them the next time I see them.

Well Al that shows we been learning something when the Frenchmans themself know what we are talking about and I and Lee will have the laugh on the rest of the boys when we get there that is if we do get there but for some reason another I have got a hunch that we won't never see France and I can't explain why but once in a while a man gets a hunch and a lot of times they are generally always right. Your pal,

JACK.

On the Ship Board, Jan. 23.

FRIEND AL: Well Al I was just out on deck with Lee and Sargent Bishop and Bishop is a sargent in our Co. and he said he had just came from Capt. Seeley and Capt. Seeley told him to tell

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all the N. C. O. officers like sargents and corporals that if a sub got us we was to leave the privates get into the boats first before we got in and we wasn't to get into our boats till all the privates was safe in the boats because we would probably be cooler and not get all excited like the privates. So you see Al if something does happen us birds will have to take things in hand you might say and we will have to stick on the job and not think about ourselfs till everybody else is taken care of.

Well Lee said that Doran one of the sailors told him something on the quiet that didn't never get into the newspapers and that was about one of the trips that come off in December and it seems like a whole fleet of subs got on to it that some transports was comeing so they layed for them and they shot a periscope at one of the transports and hit it square in the middle and it begun to sink right away and it looked like they wouldn't nobody get into the boats but the sargents and corporals was as cool as if nothing was comeing off and they quieted the soldiers down and finely got them into the boats and the N. C. O. officers was so cool and done so well that when Gen. Pershing heard about it he made this rule about the N. C. O. officer always waiting till the last so they could kind of handle things. But Doran also told Lee that they was some men sunk with the ship and they was all N. C. O. officers except one sailor and of course the

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ship sunk so quick that some of the corporals and sargents didn't have no time to get off on acct. of haveing to wait till the last. So you see that when you read the newspapers you don't get all the dope because they don't tell the reporters only what they feel like telling them.

Well Al I guess I told you all ready about me haveing this hunch that I wouldn't never see France and I guess it looks now more then ever like my hunch was right because if we get hit I will have to kind of look out for the boys that's in my boat and not think about myself till everybody else is O. K. and Doran says if this ship ever does get hit it will sink quick because its so big and heavy and of course the heavier a ship is it will sink all the sooner and Doran says he knows they are laying for us because he has made five trips over and back on this ship and he never was on a trip when a sub didn't get after them.

Well I will close for this time because I am not feeling very good Al and it isn't nothing I eat or like that but its just I feel kind of faint like I use to sometimes when I would pitch a tough game in St. Louis when it was hot or something.

Your pal, JACK.

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On the Ship Board, Jan. 23.

FRIEND AL: Well I all ready wrote you one letter today but I kind of feel like I better write to you again because any minute we are libel to hear a bang against the side of the boat and you know what that means and I have got a hunch that I won't never get off of the ship alive but will go down with her because I wouldn't never leave the ship as long as they was anybody left on her rules or no rules but I would stay and help out till every man was off and then of course it would be to late but any way I would go down feeling like I had done my duty. Well Al when a man has got a hunch like that he would be a sucker to not pay no tension to it and that is why I am writeing to you again because I got some things I want to say before the end.

Now old pal I know that Florrie hasn't never warmed up towards you and Bertha and wouldn't never go down to Bedford with me and pay you a visit and every time I ever give her a hint that I would like to have you and Bertha come up and see us she always had some excuse that she was going to be busy or this and that and of course I knew she was trying to alibi herself and the truth was she always felt like Bertha and her wouldn't have nothing in common you might say because

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Florrie has always been a swell dresser and cared a whole lot about how she looked and some way she felt like Bertha wouldn't feel comfortable around where she was at and maybe she was right but we can forget all that now Al and I can say one thing Al she never said nothing reflecting on you yourself in any way because I wouldn't of stood for it but instead of that when I showed her that picture of you and Bertha in your wedding suit she made the remark that you looked like one of the honest homely kind of people that their friends could always depend on them. Well Al when she said that she hit the nail on the head and I always knew you was the one pal who I could depend on and I am depending on you now and I know that if I am laying down at the bottom of the ocean tonight you will see that my wishs in this letter is carried out to the letter.

What I want to say is about Florrie and little Al. Now don't think Al that I am going to ask you for financial assistants because I would know better then that and besides we don't need it on acct. of me having $10000 dollars soldier insurence in Florrie's name as the benefitter and the way she is coining money in that beauty parlor she won't need to touch my insurence but save it for little Al for a rainy day only I suppose that the minute she gets her hands on it she will blow it for widows

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weeds and I bet they will be some weeds Al and everybody will think they are flowers instead of weeds.

But what I am getting at is that she won't need no money because with what I leave her and what she can make she has got enough and more then enough but I often say that money isn't the only thing in this world and they's a whole lot of things pretty near as good and one of them is kindness and what I am asking from you and Bertha is to drop in on her once in a while up in Chi and pay her a visit and I have all ready wrote her a letter telling her to ask you but even if she don't ask you go and see her any way and see how she is getting along and if she is takeing good care of the kid or leaving him with the Swede nurse all the while.

Between you and I Al what I am scared of most is that Florrie's mind will be effected if anything happens to me and without knowing what she was doing she would probably take the first man that asked her and believe me she is not the kind that would have to wait around on no st. corner to catch somebody's eye but they would follow her around and nag at her till she married them and I would feel like he—ll over it because Florrie is the kind of a girl that has got to be handled right and not only that but what would become of little Al with

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some horse Dr. for a father in law and probably this bird would treat him like a dog and beat him up either that or make a sissy out of him.

Well Al old pal I know you will do like I ask and go and see her and maybe you better go alone but if you do take Bertha along I guess it would be better and not let Bertha say nothing to her because Florrie is the kind that flare up easy and specially when they think they are a little better then somebody. But if you could just drop her a hint and say that she should ought to be proud to be a widow to a husband that died for Uncle Sam and she ought to live for my memory and for little Al and try and make him as much like I as possible I believe it would make her think and any way I want you to do it for me old pal.

Well good by old pal and I wished I could leave some thing to you and Bertha and believe me I would if I had ever known this was comeing off this way though of course I figured right along that I wouldn't last long in France because what chance has a corporal got? But I figured I would make some arrangements for a little present for you and Bertha as soon as I got to France but of course it looks now like I wouldn't never get there and all the money I have got is tied up so its to late to think of that and all as I can say is good luck to you and Bertha and everybody in Bedford and I

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hope they will be proud of me and remember I done my best and I often say what more can a man do then that?

Well Al I will say good by again and good luck and now have got to quit and go to chow.

Your pal to the last,

JACK KEEFE.

On the Ship Board, Jan. 24.

FRIEND AL: Well this has been some day and wait till you hear about it and hear what come off and some of the birds on this ship took me for a sucker and tried to make a rummy out of me but I was wise to their game and I guess the shoe is on the other foot this time.

Well it was early this A. M. and I couldn't sleep and I was up on deck and along come one of them French officers that's been on board all the way over. Well I thought I would try myself out on him like Lee said he done so I give him a salute and I said to him "Schones tag nicht wahr." Like you would say its a beautiful day only I thought I was saying it in French but wait till you hear about it Al.

Well Al they ain't nobody in the world fast enough to of caught what he said back to me and I won't never know what he said but I won't never forget how he looked at me and when I took one

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look at him I seen we wasn't going to get along very good so I turned around and started up the deck. Well he must of flagged the first man he seen and sent him after me and it was a 2d. lieut. and he come running up to me and stopped me and asked me what was my name and what Co. and etc. and at first I was going to stall and then I thought I better not so I told him who I was and he left me go.

Well I didn't know then what was comeing off so I just layed low and I didn't have to wait around long and all of a sudden a bird from the Colonel's staff found me in the parlor and says I was wanted right away and when I got to this room there was the Col. and the two Frenchmans and my captain Capt. Seeley and a couple others so I saluted and I can't tell you exactly what come off because I can't remember all what the Colonel said but it was something like this.

In the first place he says "Corporal Keefe they's some little matters that you have got to explain and we was going to pass them up first on the grounds that Capt. Seeley said you probably didn't know no better but this thing that come off this A. M. can't be explained by ignorants."

So then he says "It was reported that you was standing on deck the night before last and you made the remark that we had a he—ll of a censor ship." And he says "What did you mean by that?"

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So you see Al this smart alex of a Lee had told me they called the first ship the censor ship and I believed him at first because I was thinking about something else or of course I never would of believed him because the censor ship isn't no ship like this kind of a ship but means something else. So I explained about that and I seen Capt. Seeley kind of crack a smile so then I knew I was O. K.

So then he pulled it on me about speaking to Capt. Somebody of the French army in the German language and of course they was only one answer to that and you see the way it was Al all the time Smith was pretending to learn us French he was learning us German and Lee put him up to it but when the Colonel asked me what I meant by doing such a thing as talk German why of course I knew in a minute that they had been trying to kid me but at first I told the Colonel I couldn't of said no German because I don't know no more German than Silk O'Loughlin. Well the Frenchman was pretty sore and I don't know what would of came off only for Capt. Seeley and he spoke up and said to the Colonel that if he could have a few minutes to investigate he thought he could clear things up because he figured I hadn't intended to do nothing wrong and somebody had probably been playing jokes.

So Capt. Seeley went out and it seemed like a couple of yrs. till he came back and he had Smith

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and Lee and Doran with him. So then them 3 birds was up on the carpet and I'll say they got some panning and when it was all over the Colonel said something about they being a dam site to much kidding back and fourth going on and he hoped that before long we would find out that this war wasn't no practicle joke and he give Lee and Smith a fierce balling out and he said he would leave Capt. Seeley to deal with them and he would report Doran to the proper quarters and then he was back on me again and he said it looked like I had been the innocent victim of a practicle joke but he says "You are so dam innocent that I figure you are temperately unfit to hold on to a corporal's warrant so you can consider yourself reduced to the ranks. We can't have no corporals that if some comedian told them the Germans was now one of our allies they would try and get in the German trenches and shake hands with them."

Well Al when it was all over I couldn't hardly keep from laughing because you see I come out of it O. K. and the laugh was on Smith and Lee and Doran because I got just what I wanted because I never did want to be a corporal because it meant I couldn't pal around with the boys and be their pals and I never felt right when I was giveing them orders because I would rather be just one of them and make them feel like we were all equals.

Of course they wasn't no time on the whole trip

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when Lee or Doran or Smith either one of them had me fooled because just to look at them you would know they are the kind of smart alex that's always trying to put something over on somebody only I figured two could play at that game as good as one and I would kid them right back and give them as good as they sent because I always figure that the game ain't over till the ninth inning and the man that does the laughing then has got all the best of it. But at that I don't bear no bad will towards neither one of them and I have got a good notion to ask Capt. Seeley to let them off easy.

Well Al this is a long letter but I wanted you to know I wasn't no corporal no more and if a sub hits us now Al I can hop into a boat as quick as I feel like it but jokeing a side if something like that happened it wouldn't make no difference to me if I was a corporal or not a corporal because I am a man and I would do my best and help the rest of the boys get into the boats before I thought about myself. Your pal, JACK.

On the Ship Board, Jan. 25.

FRIEND AL: Well old pal just a line to let you know we are out of the danger zone and pretty near in port and I can't tell you where we land at but everybody is hollering and the band's

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playing and I guess the boys feels a whole lot better then when we was out there where the subs could get at us but between you and I Al I never thought about the subs all the way over only when I heard somebody else talk about them because I always figure that if they's some danger of that kind the best way to do is just forget it and if its going to happen all right but what's the use of worrying about it? But I suppose lots of people is built different and they have just got to worry all the while and they get scared stiff just thinking about what might happen but I always say nobody ever got fat worrying so why not just forget it and take things as they come.

Well old pal they's to many sights to see so I will quit for this time. Your pal,

JACK.

Somewheres in France, Jan. 26.

FRIEND AL: Well old pal here we are and its against the rules to tell you where we are at but of course it don't take no Shylock to find out because all you would have to do is look at the post mark that they will put on this letter.

Any way you couldn't pronounce what the town's name is if you seen it spelled out because it isn't nothing like how its spelled out and you won't catch me trying to pronounce none of these names

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or talk French because I am off of languages for a while and good old American is good enough for me eh Al?

Well Al now that its all over I guess we was pretty lucky to get across the old pond without no trouble because between you and I Al I heard just a little while ago from one of the boys that three nights ago we was attacked and our ship just missed getting hit by a periscope and the destroyers went after the subs and they was a whole flock of them and the reason we didn't hear nothing is that the death bombs don't go off till they are way under water so you can't hear them but between you and I Al the navy men say they was nine subs sank.

Well I didn't say nothing about it to the man who tipped me off but I had a hunch that night that something was going on and I don't remember now if it was something I heard or what it was but I knew they was something in the air and I was expecting every minute that the signal would come for us to take to the boats but they wasn't no necessity of that because the destroyers worked so fast and besides they say they don't never give no alarm till the last minute because they don't want to get everybody up at night for nothing.

Well any way its all over now and here we are and you ought to of heard the people in the town here cheer us when we come in and you ought to see

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how the girls look at us and believe me Al they are some girls. Its a good thing I am an old married man or I believe I would pretty near be tempted to flirt back with some of the ones that's been trying to get my eye but the way it is I just give them a smile and pass on and they's no harm in that and I figure a man always ought to give other people as much pleasure as you can as long as it don't harm nobody.

Well Al everybody's busier then a chicken with their head off and I haven't got no more time to write. But when we get to where we are going I will have time maybe and tell you how we are getting along and if you want drop me a line and I wish you would send me the Chi papers once in a while especially when the baseball training trips starts but maybe they won't be no Jack Keefe to send them to by that time but if they do get me I will die fighting. You know me Al.

Your pal,

JACK.

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CHAPTER II

PRIVATE VALENTINE

Somewheres in France, Feb. 2.

FRIEND AL: Well Al here I am only I can't tell you where its at because the censor rubs it out when you put down the name of a town and besides that even if I was to write out where we are at you wouldn't have no idear where its at because how you spell them hasn't nothing to do with their name if you tried to say it.

For inst. they's a town a little ways from us that when you say it its Lucy like a gal or something but when you come to spell it out its Loucey like something else.

Well Al any way this is where they have got us staying till we get called up to the front and I can't hardly wait till that comes off and some say it may be tomorrow and others say we are libel to be here a yr. Well I hope they are wrong because I would rather live in the trenches then one of these billets where they got us and between you and I Al its nothing more then a barn. Just think of a man like I Al thats been use to nothing only the best hotels in the big league and now they got

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me staying in a barn like I was a horse or something and I use to think I was cold when they had us sleeping with imaginery blankets out to Camp Grant but I would prespire if I was there now after this and when we get through here they can send us up to the north pole in our undershirt and we would half to keep moping the sweat off of our forehead and set under a electric fan to keep from sweltering.

Well they have got us pegged as horses all right not only because they give us a barn to live in but also from the way they sent us here from where we landed at in France and we made the trip in cattle cars and 1 of the boys says they must of got us mixed up with the calvary or something. It certainly was some experience to be rideing on one of these French trains for a man that went back and fourth to the different towns in the big league and back in a special Pullman and sometimes 2 of them so as we could all have lower births. Well we didn't have no births on the French R. R. and it wouldn't of done us no good to of had them because you wouldn't no sooner dose off when the engine would let off a screem that sounded like a woman that seen a snake and 1 of the boys says that on acct. of all the men being in the army they had women doing the men's work and judgeing by the noise they even had them whistleing for the crossings.

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Well we finely got here any way and they signed us to our different billets and they's 20 of us in this one not counting a couple of pigs and god knows how many rats and a cow that mews all night. We haven't done nothing yet only look around but Monday we go to work out to the training grounds and they say we won't only half to march 12 miles through the mud and snow to get there. Mean time we set and look out the cracks onto Main St. and every little wile they's a Co. of pollutes marchs through or a train of motor Lauras takeing stuff up to the front or bringing guys back that didn't duck quick enough and to see these Frenchmens march you would think it was fun but when they have been at it a wile they will loose some of their pep.

Well its warmer in bed then setting here writeing so I will close for this time. Your pal,

JACK.

Somewheres in France, Feb. 4.

FRIEND AL: Well Al I am writeing this in the Y. M. C. A. hut where they try and keep it warm and all the boys that can crowd in spends most of their spare time here but we don't have much spare time at that because its always one thing another and I guess its just as well they keep

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us busy because every time they find out you are not doing nothing they begin vaxinating everybody.

They's enough noise in here so as a man can't hear yourself think let alone writeing a letter so if I make mistakes in spelling and etc. in this letter you will know why it is. They are singing the song now about the baby's prayer at twilight where the little girl is supposed to be praying for her daddy that's a soldier to take care of himself but if she was here now she would be praying for him to shut up his noise.

Well we was in the trenchs all day not the regular ones but the ones they got for us to train in them and they was a bunch of French officers trying to learn us how to do this in that and etc. and some of the time you could all most understand what they was trying to tell you and then it was stuff we learnt the first wk. out to Camp Grant and I suppose when they get so as they can speak a few words of English they will tell us we ought to stand up when we hear the Star spangle Banner. Well we was a pretty sight when we got back with the mud and slush and everything and by the time they get ready to call us into action they will half to page us in the morgue.

About every 2 or 3 miles today we would pass through a town where some of the rest of the boys has got their billets only they don't call it miles in

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France because that's to easy to say but instead of miles they call them kilometts. But any way from the number of jerk water burgs we went through you would think we was on the Monon and the towns all looks so much like the other that when one of the French soldiers gets a few days leave off they half to spend most of it looking for land marks so as they will know if they are where they live. And they couldn't even be sure if it was warm weather and their folks was standing out in front of the house because all the familys is just alike with the old Mr. and the Mrs. and pigs and a cow and a dog.

Well Al they say its pretty quite these days up to the front and the boys that's been around here a wile says you can hear the guns when they's something doing and the wind blows this way but we haven't heard no guns yet only our own out to where we have riffle practice but everybody says as soon as spring comes and the weather warms up the Germans is sure to start something. Well I don't care if they start anything or not just so the weather warms up and besides they won't never finish what they start unless they start going back home and they won't even finish that unless they show a whole lot more speed then they did comeing. They are just trying to throw a scare into somebody with a lot of junk about a big drive they are going to make but I have seen birds come up to

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hit in baseball Al that was going to drive it out of the park but their drive turned out to be a hump back liner to the pitcher. I remember once when Speaker come up with a couple men on and we was 2 runs ahead in the 9th. inning and he says to me "Well busher here is where I hit one a mile." Well Al he hit one a mile all right but it was ½ a mile up and the other ½ a mile down and that's the way it goes with them gabby guys and its the same way with the Germans and they talk all the time so as they will get thirsty and that's how they like to be.

Speaking about thirsty Al its different over here then at home because when a man in uniform wants a drink over here you don't half to hire no room in a hotel and put on your nightgown but you can get it here in your uniform only what they call beer here we would pore it on our wheat cakes at home and they got 2 kinds of wine red and white that you could climb outside of a bbl. of it without asking the head waiter to have them play the Rosery. But they say the champagne is O. K. and I am going to tackle it when I get a chance and you may think from that that I have got jack to throw away but over here Al is where they make the champagne and you can get a qt. of it for about a buck or ½ what you would pay for it in the U. S. and besides that the money they got here is a frank instead of a dollar and a frank isn't only worth

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about $.19 cents so a man can have a whole lot better time here and not cost him near as much.

And another place where the people in France has got it on the Americans and that is that when they write a letter here they don't half to pay nothing to mail it but when you write to me you have got to stick a 5 cent stamp on it but judgeing by the way you answer my letters the war will be all over before you half to break a dime. Of course I am just jokeing Al and I know why you don't write much because you haven't got nothing to write staying there in Bedford and you could take a post card and tell me all the news that happened in 10 yrs. and still have room enough yet to say Bertha sends kind regards.

But of course its different with a man like I because I am always where they is something big going on and first it was baseball and now its a bigger game yet you might say but whatever is going on big you can always count on me being in the mist of it and not buried alive in no Indiana X roads where they still think the first bounce is out. But of course I know it is not your fault that you haven't been around and seen more and it ain't every man that can get away from a small town and make a name for themself and I suppose I ought to consider myself lucky.

Well Al enough for this time and I will write soon again and I would like to hear from you even

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if you haven't nothing to say and don't forget to send me a Chi paper when you get a hold of one and I asked Florrie to send me one every day but asking her for favors is like rolling off a duck's back you might say and its first in one ear and then the other. Your pal,

JACK.

Somewheres in France, Feb. 7.

FRIEND AL: I suppose you have read articles in the papers about the war that's wrote over here by reporters and the way they do it is they find out something and then write it up and send it by cablegrams to their papers and then they print it and that's what you read in the papers.

Well Al they's a whole flock of these here reporters over here and I guess they's one for every big paper in the U. S. and they all wear bands around their sleeves with a C on them for civilian or something so as you can spot them comeing and keep your mouth shut. Well they have got their head quarters in one of the towns along the line but they ride all over the camp in automobiles and this evening I was outside of our billet and one of them come along and seen me and got out of his car and come up to me and asked if I wasn't Jack Keefe the White Sox pitcher. Well Al he writes for one of the Chi papers and of course he knows

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all about me and has seen me work. Well he asked me a lot of questions about this in that and I didn't give him no military secrets but he asked me how did I like the army game and etc.

I asked him if he was going to mention about me being here in the paper and he says the censors wouldn't stand for mentioning no names until you get killed because if they mentioned your name the Germans would know who all was here but after you are dead the Germans don't care if you had been here or not.

But he says he would put it in the paper that he was talking to a man that use to be a star pitcher on the White Sox and he says everybody would know who it was he was talking about because they wasn't such a slue of star pitchers in the army that it would take a civil service detective to find out who he meant.

So we talked along and finely he asked me was I going to write a book about the war and I said no and he says all right he would tell the paper that he had ran across a soldier that not only use to be a ball player but wasn't going to write a book and they would make a big story out of it.

So I said I wouldn't know how to go about it to write a book but when I went around the world with the 2 ball clubs that time I use to write some poultry once in a wile just for different occasions like

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where the boys was called on for a speech or something and they didn't know what to say so I would make up one of my poems and the people would go nuts over them.

So he said why didn't I tear off a few patriotic poems now and slip them to him and he would send them to his paper and they would print them and maybe if some of them was good enough somebody would set down and write a song to them and probably everybody would want to buy it and sing it like Over There and I would clean up a good peace of jack.

Well Al I told him I would see if I could think up something to write and of course I was just stalling him because a soldier has got something better to do than write songs and I will leave that to the birds that was gun shy and stayed home. But if you see in the Chi papers where one of the reporters was talking to a soldier that use to be a star pitcher in the American League or something you will know who they mean. He said he would drop by in a few days again and see if I had something wrote up for him but I will half to tell him I have been to busy to monkey with it.

As far as I can see they's enough songs all ready wrote up about the war so as everybody in the army and navy could have 1 a peace and still have a few left over for the boshs and that's a name we got up

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for the Germans Al and instead of calling them Germans we call them boshs on acct. of them being so full of bunk.

Well Al one of the burgs along the line is where Jonah Vark was born when she was alive. It seems like France was mixed up in another war along about a 100 yrs. ago and they was getting licked and Jonah was just a young gal but she dressed up in men's coat and pants and went up to the front and led the charges with a horse and she carried a white flag and the Dutchmens or whoever they was fighting against must of thought it was a flag of truants and any way they didn't fire at them and the French captured New Orleans and win the war. The Germans is trying to pull the same stuff on our boys now and lots of times they run up and holler Conrad like they was going to give up and when your back is turned they whang away at you but they won't pull none of that stuff on me and when one of them trys to Conrad me I will perculate them with a bayonet.

Well Al the boys is starting their choir practice and its good night and some times I wished I was a deef and dumb mute and couldn't hear nothing.

Your pal, JACK.

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Somewheres in France, Feb. 9.

FRIEND AL: Well Al I didn't have nothing to do last night and I happened to think about that reporter and how he would be comeing along in a few days asking for that poultry.

I figured I might as well set down and write him up a couple verses because them fellows is hard up for articles to send their paper because in the first place we don't tell them nothing so they could write it up and when they write it the censors smeers out everything but the question marks and dots but of course they would leave them send poems because the Germans couldn't make head or tale out of them. So any way I set down and tore off 3 verses and he says they ought to be something about a gal in it so here is what I wrote:

Near a year ago today
Pres. Wilson of the U. S. A.
had something to say,
"Germany you better keep away
This is no time for play."
When it come time to go
America was not slow
Each one said good by to their girl so dear
And some of them has been over here
since last year.

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I will come home when the war is over
Back to the U. S. A.
So don't worry little girlie
And now we are going to Berlin
And when we the Kaiser skin
and the war we will win
And make the Kaiser jump out of his skin.

The ones that stays at home
Can subscribe to the liberty loan
And some day we will come home
to the girles that's left alone
Old Kaiser Bill is up against it
For all are doing their bit.
Pres. Wilson says the stars and stripes
Will always fight for their rights.

That's what I tore off and when he comes around again I will have it for him and if you see it in the Chi papers you will know who wrote it up and maybe somebody will write a song to it but of course they can't sign my name to it unless I get killed or something but I guess at that they ain't so many soldiers over here that can turn out stuff like that but what my friends won't be pretty sure who wrote it.

But if something does happen to me I wished you would kind of keep your eyes pealed and if the

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song comes out try and see that Florrie gets some jack out of it and I haven't wrote nothing to her about it because she is like all other wifes and when somebodys else husband pulls something its O. K. but if their own husband does it he must of had a snoot full.

Well today was so rotten that they didn't make us go nowheres and I'll say its got to be pretty rotten when they do that and the meal they give us tonight wouldn't of bulged out a grandaddy long legs and I and my buddy Frank Carson was both hungry after we eat and I suppose you will wonder what do I mean by buddy. Well Al that's a name I got up for who ever you pal around with or bunk next to them and now everybody calls their pal their buddy. Well any way he says why didn't we go over to the Red X canteen resturent and buy ourself a feed so we went over and its a little shack where the Red X serves you a pretty good meal for 1 frank and that's about $.19 cents and they don't try and make no profits on it but just run them so as a man don't half to go along all the wile on what the army hands out to you.

Well they was 3 janes on the job over there and 2 of them would be safe anywheres you put them but the other one is Class A and her old woman must of been pie eyed when she left her come over here. Well Carson said she belonged to him because he had seen her before and besides I was a married

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man so I says all right go ahead and get her. Well Al it would be like Terre Haute going after George Sisler or somebody and the minute we blowed in she didn't have eyes for only me but I wasn't going to give her no encouragement because we were here to kill Germans and not ladys but I wished you could of seen the smile she give me. Well she's just as much a American as I or you but of course Carson had to be cute and try to pull some of his French on her so he says Bon soir Madam Moselle and that is the same like we would say good evening but when Carson pulled it I spoke up and said "If your bones is soir why don't you go and take the baths somewhere?" Pretending like I thought he meant his bones were sore. Well the little lady got it O. K. and pretty near laughed outright. You see Al when a person has got rhuematism they go and take the baths like down to Mudlavia so I meant if his bones was sore he better go somewheres like that. So the little lady tried to not laugh on acct. of me being a stranger but she couldn't hardly help from busting out and then I smiled at her back and after that Carson might as well of been mowing the lawn out in Nobody's Land. I felt kind of sorry the way things broke because here he is a man without no home ties and of course I have all ready got a wife but Miss Moselle didn't have no eyes for him and that's the way it goes but what can a man do and Carson seen how it was going and

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says to me right in front of her "Have you heard from your Mrs. since we been over?" And I didn't dast look up and see how she took it.

Well they set us up a pretty good feed and the little lady kept asking us questions like how long had we been here and what part of the U. S. we come from and etc. and finely Carson told her who I was and she popped her eyes out and says she use to go to the ball games once in a wile in N. Y. city with her old man and she didn't never think she would meet a big league pitcher and talk to them and she says she wondered if she ever seen me pitch. Well I guess if she had she would remember it specially in N. Y. because there was one club I always made them look like a fool and they wasn't the only club at that and I guess they's about 6 other clubs in the American League that if they had seen my name in the dead they wouldn't shed off enough tears to gum up the infield.

Well when we come out she asked us would we come again and we said yes but I guess its best for both she and I if I stay away but I said we would come again to be polite so she said au revoir and that's like you would say so long so I said au reservoir pretending like I didn't know the right way to say it but she seen I was just kidding and laughed and she is the kind of a gal that gets everything you pull and bright as a whip and her and I would make a good team but of course they's no

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use talking about it the way I am tied up so even when I'm sick in tired of the regular rations I won't dast go over there for a feed because it couldn't do nothing only harm to the both of us and the best way to do with those kind of affairs is to cut it out before somebody gets hurt.

Well its time to hop into the feathers and I only wished it was feathers but feathers comes off a chicken or something and I guess these matteresses we got is made out to Gary or Indiana Harbor or somewheres. Your pal, JACK.

Somewheres in France, Feb. 11.

FRIEND AL: Well Al they's several of the boys that won't need no motor Laura to carry their pay for the next couple mos. and if you was to mention champagne to them they would ask for a barrage. I was over to the Y. M. C. A. hut last night and when I come back I wished you could of seen my buddys and they was 2 of them that was still able to talk yet and they was haveing a argument because one of them wanted to pore some champagne in a dish so as the rats would get stewed and the other bird was trying to not let him because he said it always made them mean and they would go home and beat up their Mrs.

It seems like one of the boys had a birthday and his folks is well off and they had sent him some

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jack from the states to buy blankets and etc. with it and he thought it would be a sucker play to load up with bed close when spring was comeing so he loaded up with something else and some of the boys with him and for 50 or 60 franks over here you can get enough champagne to keep the dust layed all summer and of course some of the boys hadn't never tasted it before and they thought you could bathe in it like beer. They didn't pay no more tension to revelry this A. M. then if they was a corps and most of them was at that and out of the whole bunch of us they was only 7 that didn't get reported and the others got soaked 2 thirds of their pay and confined to their quarters and Capt. Seeley says if they was any more birthdays in his Co. we wouldn't wind the celebration up till sunrise and then it would be in front of a fireing squad. Well Al if the boys can't handle it no better then that they better leave it alone and just because its cheap that's no reason to try and get it all at once because the grapes will still be growing over here yet when all us birds takes our teeth off at night with our other close.

Well Al the reporter that asked me to write up the verses ain't been around since and probably he has went up to the front or somewheres and I am glad of it and I hope he forgets all about it because in the first place I am not one of the kind that is crazy to get in the papers and besides I am

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to busy to be monking with stuff like that. Yes they keep us on the jump all the wile and we are pretty well wore out when night comes around but a man wouldn't mind it if we was learning something but the way it is now its like as if we had graduated from college and then they sent us to kindegarden and outside of maybe a few skulls the whole regt. is ready right now to get up there in the trenches and show them something and I only wished we was going tomorrow but I guess some of the boys would like it to never go up there but would rather stay here in this burg and think they was haveing a good time kidding with the French gals and etc. but that's no business for a married man and even if I didn't have no family the French gals I seen so far wouldn't half to shew me away and I been hearing all my life what swell dressers they was but a scout for the Follys wouldn't waist no time in this burg.

But I'm sick in tired of the same thing day in and day out and here we been in France 2 wks. and all we done is a little riffle practice and stuff we had back home and get soping wet every day and no mail and I wouldn't wonder if Florrie and little Al had forgot all about me and if Secty. Daniels wired them that Jack Keefe had been killed they would say who and the hell is he.

So all and all they can't send us up to the front to quick and it seems like a shame that men like I

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should be held back just because they's a few birds in the regt. that can't put on a gas mask yet without triping themself up. Your pal,

JACK.

Somewheres in France, Feb. 13.

FRIEND AL: Well Al wait till you hear this and I bet you will pop your eyes out. I guess I all ready told you about Miss Moselle the little lady over to the Red X canteen. Well I was over there the day before yesterday and she wasn't around nowheres and I was glad of it because I didn't want to see her and just dropped in there to get something to eat and today I was in there again and this time she was there and she smiled when she seen me and come up and begin talking and she asked me how I liked it and I said I would like it a whole lot better if we was in the fighting and she asked me if I didn't like this town and I said well no I wasn't nuts about it and she said she didn't think I was very complementary so then I seen she wanted to get personal.

Well Al she knows I am a married man because Carson just as good as told her so I didn't see no harm in kidding her along a wile so I give her a smile and said well you know the whole town ain't like you and she blushed up and says "Well I didn't expect nothing like that from a great base-

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ball pitcher" so you see Al she had been makeing inquirys about me. So I said "Well they was only one pitcher I ever heard of that couldn't talk and that was Dummy Taylor but at that they's a whole lot of them that if they couldn't say my arm's sore they might as well be tongue tied." But I told her I wasn't one of those kind and I guest when it came to talking I could give as good as I sent and she asked me was I a college man and I kidded her along and said yes I went to Harvard and she said what year so I told her I was there 2 different yrs. and we talked along about this in that and I happened to have them verses in my pocket that I wrote up and they dropped out when I was after my pocket book and she acted like she wanted to know what the writeing was so I showed them to her.

Well Al I wished you could of seen how supprised she was when she read them and she says "So you are a poet." So I said "Yes I am a poet and don't know it" so that made her laugh and I told her about the reporter asking me to write some poems and then she asked me if she could keep a hold of those ones till she made out a copy of them to keep for herself and I said "You can keep that copy and pretend like I was thinking of you when I wrote them." Well Al I wished you could of seen her then and she couldn't say nothing at first but finely she says tomorrow was valentine day and the

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verses would do for a valentine so just jokeing I asked her if she wouldn't rather have a comical valentine and she says those ones would do O. K. so then I told her I would write her a real valentine for herself but I might maybe not get it ready in time to give her tomorrow and she says she realized it took time and any time would do.

Well of course I am not going to write up nothing for her and after this I will keep away from the canteen because it isn't right to leave her see to much of me even if she does know I am married but if I do write her something I will make it comical and no mushy stuff in it. But it does seem like fate or something that the harder I try and not get mixed up in a flirtation I can't turn around you might say but what they's some gal poping up on my trail and if it was anybody else only Miss Moselle I wouldn't mind but she is a darb and I wouldn't do nothing to hurt her for the world but they can't nobody say this is my fault.

Well Al I pretty near forgot to tell you that the boys is putting on a entertainment over to the Y. M. C. A. Saturday night and they will be singing and gags and etc. and they asked me would I give them a little talk on baseball and I said no at first but they begged me and finely I give my consent but you know how I hate makeing speeches and etc. but a man don't hardly feel like refuseing when they want me so bad so I am going to give

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them a little talk on my experiences and make it comical and I will tell you about the entertainment when its over. Your pal, JACK.

Somewheres in France, Feb. 15.

FRIEND AL: Well Al I just been over to the canteen and I give the little lady the valentine I promised to write up for her and I wasn't going to write it up only I happened to remember that I promised so I wrote something up and I was going to make it comical but I figured that would disappoint her on acct. of the way she feels towards me so here is what I wrote up.

To Miss Moselle
(Private)

A soldier don't have much time
To set down and write up a valentine
but please bear in mind
That I think about you many a time
And I wished I could call you mine
And I hope they will come a time
When I will have more time
And then everything will be fine
And if you will be my valentine
I will try and show you a good time.

Well after I had wrote it I thought I better have

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it fixed up like a valentine and they's one of the boys in our Co. named Stoops that use to be a artist so I had him draw me a couple of hearts with a bow and arrow sticking through them and a few flowers on a peace of card board and I coppied off the valentine on the card in printing and stuck it in a envelope and took it over to her and I didn't wait for her to open it up and look at it and I just says here is that valentine I promised you and its 1 day late and she blushed up and couldn't say nothing and I come away. Well Al she has read it by this time and I hope she don't take nothing I said serious but of course she knows I am a married man and she can read between the lines and see where I am trying to let her down easy and telling her to not expect no more tensions from me and its just like saying good by to her in a way only not as rough as comeing right out and saying it. But I won't see her no more and its all over before it begun you might say.

Well we passed some German prisoners today and believe me we give them a ride. Everybody called them Heinie and Fritz and I seen one of them giveing me a look like he was wondring if all the U. S. soldiers was big stroppers like I but I stuck out my tongue at him and said "What do you think you are looking at you big pretzel" and he didn't dast say nothing back. Well they was a fine looking gang and they's been a lot of storys going the

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rounds about no soap in Germany. Well Al its all true.

Well I finely got a letter from Florrie that is if you could call it a letter and to read it you wouldn't never guess that she had a husband over here in France and maybe never see him again but you would think I had went across the st. to get a bottle of ketchup and all as she said about little Al was that he needed a new pair of shoes and they's about as much news in that as if she said he woke up in the night. And the rest of the letter was about how good she was doing in the beauty parlor and for me not to worry about her because she was O. K. only for a callous on her heel and I suppose she will go to the hospital with it and here I am with so many of them that if they was worth a frank a peace I could pay the Kaiser's gas bill. And she never asked me did I need anything or how was I getting along. And she enclosed a snapshot of herself in one of these here war bride outfits and she looks so good in it that I bet she goes to church every Sunday and asks god to prolongate the war.

Your pal, JACK.

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Somewheres in France, Feb. 16.

FRIEND AL: Well Al they's a certain bird in this camp that if I ever find out who he is they won't need no tonnages to carry him back when the war's over. Let me tell you what come off tonight and what was pulled off on the little lady and I and if you read about me getting in front of the court marshall for murder you will know how it come off.

I guess I all ready told you about the show that was comeing off tonight and they asked me to make a little talk on baseball. Well they was as many there as could crowd in and the band played and they was singing and gags and storys and etc. and they didn't call on me till pretty near the last. Well Al you ought to of heard the crowd when I got up there and it sounded like old times to have them all cheering and clapping and I stepped to the front of the platform and give them a bow and it was the first time I was ever on the stage but I wasn't scared only at first.

Well I had wrote out what I was going to say and learnt the most of it by heart and here is what I give them only I won't give you only part of it because it run pretty long.

"Gentlemen and friends. I am no speech maker and I guess if I had to make speeches for a liveing I am afraid I couldn't do it but the boys is anxious

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I should say a few words about baseball and I didn't want to disappoint them. They may be some of you boys that has not followed the great American game very close and maybe don't know who Jack Keefe is. Well gentlemen I was boughten from Terre Haute in the Central League by that grand old Roman Charley Comiskey owner of the Chicago White Sox in 1913 and I been in the big league ever since except one year I was with Frisco and I stood that league on their head and Mr. Comiskey called me back and I was still starring with the Chicago White Sox when Uncle Sam sent out the call for men and I quit the great American game to enlist in the greatest game of all the game we are playing against the Kaiser and we will win this game like I have win many a game of baseball because I was to fast for them and used my brains and it will be the same with the Kaiser and America will fight to the drop of the hat and make the world safe for democracy."

Well Al I had to stop 2 or 3 minutes while they give me a hand and they clapped and hollered at pretty near everything I said. So I said "This war reminds me a good deal like a incident that happened once when I was pitching against the Detroit club. No doubt you gentlemen and officers has heard of the famous Hughey Jennings and his eeyah and on the Detroit club is also the famous Tyrus Cobb the Georgia Peach as he is called and

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I want to pay him a tribute right here and say he is one of the best ball players in the American League and a great hitter if you don't pitch just right to him. One time we was in Detroit for a serious of games and we had loose the first two games do to bad pitching and the first game Eddie Cicotte didn't have nothing and the second game Faber was in the same boat so on this morning I refer to Manager Rowland come up to me in the lobby of the Tuller hotel and said how do you feel Jack and I said O. K. Clarence why do you ask? And he said well we have loose 2 games here and we have got to grab this one this P. M. and if you feel O. K. I will work you because I know you have got them licked as soon as you walk out there. So I said all right Clarence you can rely on me. And that P. M. I give them 3 hits and shut them out and Cobb come up in the ninth innings with two men on bases and two men out and Ray Schalk our catcher signed me for a curve ball but I shook my head and give him my floater and the mighty Cobb hit that ball on a line to our right fielder Eddie Murphy and the game was over.

"This war is a good deal like baseball gentlemen because it is stratejy that wins and no matter how many soldiers a gen. has got he won't get nowheres without he uses his brains and its the same in baseball and the boys that stays in the big league is the boys that can think and when this war is over

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I hope to go back and begin where I left off and win a pennant for Charley Comiskey the old Roman in the American League."

Well Al they was a regular storm when I got through and I bowed and give them a smile and started off of the platform but a sargent named Avery from our Co. stopped me and set me down in a chair and says I was to wait a minute and I thought of course they was going to give me a cup or something though I didn't expect nothing of the kind but I hadn't no sooner set down when Sargent Avery stepped up to the front of the platform and says "Gentlemen I want to say to you that Private Jack Keefe the great stratejest is not only a great pitcher and a great speech maker but he is also a great poet and if you don't believe me I will read you this beautiful valentine that he wrote to a certain lady that we all admire and who was in the Red X canteen up till today when she went back to Paris to resume other dutys."

Well before I could make a move he read that crazy valentine and of course they wasn't a word in it that I was serious when I wrote it and it was all a joke with me only not exactly a joke neither because I was really trying to let the little lady down easy and tell her good by between the lines without being rough with it. But of course these boobs pretended like they thought I meant it all and was love sick or something and they hollered

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like a bunch of Indians and clapped and razed he—ll.

Well Al I didn't get a chance to see Sargent Avery after it was over because he blowed right out but I will see him tomorrow and I will find out from him who stole that poem from Miss Moselle and I wouldn't be supprised if the reason she blowed to Paris was on acct. of missing the poem and figureing some big bum had stole it off her and they would find out her secret and make things misable for her and the chances is that's why she blowed. Well wait till I find out who done it and they will be one less snake in this regt. and the sooner you weed those kind of birds out of the army you will get somewheres and if you don't you won't.

But the poor little lady Al I can't help from feeling sorry for her and I only wished I could go to Paris and find her and tell her to not worry though of course its best if she don't see me again but I'm sorry it had to come off this way. Your pal,

JACK.

Somewheres in France, Feb. 18.

FRIEND AL: Well Al this may be the last letter you will ever get from me because I am waiting now to find out what they are going to do with me and I will explain what I mean.

Yesterday A. M. I seen Sargent Avery and I

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asked him if I could talk to him a minute and he says yes and I said I wanted to find out from him who stole that valentine from Miss Moselle. So he says "Who is Miss Moselle?" So I said "Why that little lady in the canteen that's blowed to Paris." So he says "Well that little lady's name isn't Miss Moselle but her name is Ruth Palmer and she is the daughter of one of the richest birds in N. Y. city and they wasn't nobody stole no valentine from her because she give the valentine to me before she left." So I said "What do you mean she give it to you?" So he says "I mean she give it to me and when she give it to me she said us birds was in the same Co. with a poet and didn't know it and she thought it was about time we was finding it out. So she laughed and give me the valentine and that's the whole story."

Well Al I had a 20 frank note on me and I asked Sargent Avery if he wouldn't like some champagne and he said no he wouldn't. But that didn't stop me Al and I got all I could hold onto and then some and I snuck in last night after lights out and I don't know if anybody was wise or not but if they are its libel to go hard with me and Capt. Seeley said something about the fireing squad for the next bird that cut loose.

Well I reported sick this A. M. and they could tell to look at me that it wasn't no stall so I'm here and the rest of the boys is gone and I am waiting

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for them to summons me before the court marshall. But listen Al if they do like Capt. Seeley said you can bet that before they get me I will get some of these birds that's been calling me Private Valentine ever since Saturday night. Your pal,

JACK.

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CHAPTER III

STRAGETY AND TRAGEDY

Somewheres in France, March 2.

FRIEND AL: Well Al if it rains a couple more days like its been they will half to page the navy and at that its about time they give them something to do and I don't mean the chasers and destroyers and etc. that acts like convoys for our troop ships and throws them death bombs at the U boats but I mean the big battle ships and I bet you haven't heard of a supper dread 0 doing nothing since we been in the war and they say they can't do nothing till the German navy comes out and that's what they're waiting for. Well Al that's a good deal like waiting for the 30nd. of Feb. or for Jennings to send his self up to hit for Cobb and they can say all they want about the Germans being bullet proof from the neck up but they got some brains and you can bet their navy ain't comeing out no more then my hair. So as far as I can see a man being on a supper dread 0 is just like you owned a private yatch without haveing to pay for the keep up and when they talk about a man on a

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big U. S. battle ship in danger they mean he might maybe die because he eat to much and no exercise.

So if I was them I would send the big ships here so as we could use them for motor Lauras and I guess they's no place in our whole camp where you couldn't float them and I don't know how it is all over France but if they was a baseball league between the towns where they have got us billeted the fans would get blear eyed looking at the no game sign and if a mgr. worked their pitchers in turn say it was my turn tomorrow and the next time my turn come around some of little Al's kids would half to help me out of the easy chair and say "Come on granpa you pitch this afternoon."

Jokeing a side Al if I was running the training camps like Camp Grant back home instead of starting the men off with the regular drills and hikes like they give them now I would stand them under a shower bath with their close on about ½ the time and when it come time for a hike I would send them back and fourth across Rock River and back where they wasn't no bridge. And then maybe when they got over here France wouldn't be such a big supprise.

One of the boys has put a sign up on our billet and it says Noahs Ark on it and maybe you have heard that old gag Al about the big flood that everybody was drownded only Noah and his folks and a married couple of every kind of animals in

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the world and they wasn't drownded because Noah had a Ark for them to get in out of the wet. Well Noahs Ark is a good name for our dump and believe me they haven't none of the animals been overlooked and we are also going Noah one better and sheltering all the bugs and some of them is dressed in cocky.

Well I am in this war to the finish and you couldn't hire me to quit till we have ran them ragged but I wished they had of gave us steel helmets wide enough so as they would make a bumber shoot and I hope the next war they have they will pick out Arizona to have it there. Your pal,

JACK.

Somewheres in France, March 6.

FRIEND AL: Well Al I suppose you have read in the communicates that comes out in the paper where the Americans that's all ready in the trenchs has pulled off some great stuff and a whole lot of them has been sighted and give meddles and etc. by the Frenchmens for what they have pulled off and the way they work it Al when one of the soldiers wrists his life or something and pulls off something big like takeing a mess of prisoners and bringing them back here where they can get something to eat the French pins a meddle on them and sometimes they do it if you don't do nothing

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but die only then of course they send it to your family so as they will have something to show their friends besides snapshots of Mich. City.

Well we was kidding back and fourth about it today and one of the smart alex in our Co. a bird named Johnny Alcock that is always trying to kid somebody all the time he said to me "Well I suppose they will half to build more tonnages to carry all the meddles you will win back to the states." So I said "Well I guess I will win as many of them as you will win." That shut him up for a wile but finely he says "You have got enough chest to wear a whole junk shop on it." So I said "Well I am not the baby that can't win them." So he says "If you ever happen to be snooping around the bosh trenchs when Fritz climbs over the top you will come back so fast that the Kaiser will want to know who was that speed merchant that led the charge and decorate you with a iron cross." So I said "I will decorate you right in the eye one of these days." So he had to shut up and all the other boys give him the laugh.

Well Al jokeing to one side if I half to go back home without a meddle it will be because they are playing favorites but I guess I wouldn't be left out at that because I stand ace high with most of the Frenchmens around here because they like a man that's always got a smile or a kind word for them and they would like me still better yet if they could

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understand more English and get my stuff better but it don't seem like they even try to learn and I suppose its because they figure the war is in their country so everybody should ought to talk their language but when you get down to cases they's a big job on both our hands and if one of us has got to talk the others language why and the he—ll should they pick on the one that's hard to learn it and besides its 2 to 1 you might say because the U. S. and the English uses the same language and they's nobody only the French that talks like they do because they couldn't nobody else talk that way so why wouldn't it be the square thing for them to forget theirs and tackle ours and it would prolongate their lifes to do it because most of their words can't be said without straining yourself and no matter what kind of a physic you got its bound to wear you down in time.

But I suppose the French soldiers figure they have got enough of a job on their hands remembering their different uniforms and who to salute and etc. and they have got a fine system in the French army Al because you wear whatever you was before you got to be what you are that is sometimes. For inst. suppose you use to be in the artillery and now you are a aviator you still wear a artillery uniform part of the time and its like I use to pitch for the White Sox and I guess I would be a pretty looking bird if I waddled around in the mire here a wile

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with my old baseball unie on me and soon people would begin to think I was drafted from the Toledo Mud Hens.

Seriously Al sometimes you see 4 or 5 French officers comeing along and they haven't one of them got the same color uniform on but they are all dressed up like a Roman candle you might say and if their uniforms run when they got wet a man could let them drip into a pail and drink it up for a pussy cafe.

Well Al the boys in our regt. is going to get out a newspaper and get it out themself and it will be just the news about our regt. and a few gags and comical storys about the different boys and they are going to get it out once per wk.

Corp. Pierson from our Co. that use to work on a newspaper somewheres is going to be the editor and he wants I should write them up something about baseball and how to pitch and etc. but I don't believe in a man waisting their time on a childs play like writeing up articles for a newspaper but just to stall him I said I would try and think up something and give it to him when I had it wrote up. Well him waiting for my article will be like me waiting for mail because I don't want nobody to take me for a newspaper man because I seen enough of them in baseball and one time we was playing in Phila. and I had them shut out up to the 8th inning and all of a sudden Weaver and Collins got a

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stroke of paralysis and tipped their caps to a couple ground balls that grazed their shoe laces and then Rube Oldring hit one on a line right at Gandil and he tried to catch it on the bounce off his lap and Bill Dinneen's right arm was lame and he begin calling everything a ball and first thing you know they beat us 9 to 2 or something and Robbins one of the Chi paper reporters that traveled with us wired a telegram home to his paper that Phila. was supposed to be a town where a man could get plenty of sleep but I looked like I had set up all the nights we was there and of course Florrie seen it in the paper and got delirious and I would of busted Robbins in the jaw only I wasn't sure if he realy wrote it that way or the telegraph operator might of balled it up.

So they won't be no newspaper articles in mine Al but I will be anxious to see what Pierson's paper looks like when it comes out and I bet it will be a fine paper if our bunch have the writeing of it because the most of them would drop in a swoon if you asked them how to spell their name.

Your pal, JACK.

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Somewheres in France, March 9.

FRIEND AL: Well Al I guess I all ready told you about them getting up a newspaper in our regt. and Joe Pierson asked me would I write them up something for it and I told him no I wouldn't but it seems like he overheard me and thought I said I would so any way he was expecting something from me so last night I wrote them up something and I don't know if the paper will ever get printed or not so I will coppy down a part of what I wrote to give you a idear of what I wrote. He wanted I should write them up something about the stragety of baseball and where it was like the stragety in the war because one night last month I give them a little talk at one of their entertainments about how the man that used their brains in baseball was the one that win just like in the army but I guess I all ready told you about me giveing them that little talk and afterwards I got a skinfull of the old grape and I thought sure they would have me up in front of the old court marshall but they never knowed the difference on acct. of the way I can handle it and you take the most of the boys and if they see a cork they want to kiss the Colonel. Well any way here is the article I wrote up and I called it War and Baseball 2 games where brains wins.

"The gen. public that go out to the baseball

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park and set through the games probably think they see everything that is going on on the field but they's a lot of stuff that goes on on the baseball field that the gen. public don't see and don't know nothing about and I refer to what we baseball boys calls inside baseball.

"No one is in a better position to know all about inside baseball then a man like I who have been a pitcher in the big league because it is the pitchers that has to do most of the thinking and pull off the smart plays that is what wins ball games. For inst. I will write down about a little incidents that come off one time 2 yrs. ago when the Boston club was playing against the Chicago White Sox where I was one of the stars when the U. S. went into the war and then I dropped baseball and signed up a contract with Uncle Sam to play for my country in the big game against the Kaiser of Germany. This day I refer to I was in there giveing them the best I had but we was in a tight game because the boys was not hitting behind me though Carl Mays that was pitching for the Boston club didn't have nothing on the ball only the cover and after the ball left his hand you could have ran in the club house and changed your undershirt and still be back in time to swing when the ball got up there.

"Well it come along the 9th. inning and we was tied up with the score 2 and 2 and I had Larry

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Gardner swinging like a hammock all day but this time he hit a fly ball that either Weaver or Jackson ought to of caught in a hollow tooth but they both layed down and died on it and Gardner got on second base. Well they was 2 men out and Hoblitzel was the next man up and the next man after he was Scott their shortstop that couldn't take the ball in his hand and make a base hit off a man like I so instead of me giveing Hobby a ball to hit I walked him as we call it and then of course it was Scott's turn to bat and Barry their mgr. hesitated if he should send Ruth up to hit for Scott or not but finely he left Scott go up there and he was just dragging his bat off his shoulder to swing at the first strike when I whizzed the third one past him.

"That is what we call inside baseball or stragety whether its in baseball or war is walking a man like Hoblitzel that might be lucky enough to hit one somewheres but if you don't give him nothing to hit how can he hit it and then I made Scott look like he had been sent for but couldn't come. Afterwards in the 11th. inning Duffy Lewis hit a ball that he ought to of been traded for even swinging at it because it come near clipping his ear lob but any way he swang at it and hit it for three bases because Jackson layed down and died going after it and Lewis scored on a past ball and they beat us 3 to 2.

"So that is what we call stragety on the base-

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ball field and it wins there the same like in war and this war will be win by the side that has gens. with brains and use them and I figure where a man that has been in big league baseball where you can't never make a success out of it unless you are a quick thinker and they have got a big advantage over men that's been in other walks of life where its most all luck and I figure the army would be a whole lot better off if all the officers and gens. had of played baseball in the big leagues and learned to think quick, but of course they ain't everybody that have got the ability to play baseball and stand the gaff but the man that has got the ability and been through the ropes is just that much ahead of the rest of them and its to bad that most of our gens. is so old that they couldn't of knew much about baseball since it become a test of brains like it is now.

"I am afraid I have eat up a lot of space with my little Article on War and Baseball so I will end this little article up with a little comical incidents that happened dureing our training trip down in Mineral Wells, Tex. a year ago this spring. The first day we was out for practice they was a young outfielder from a bush league and Mgr. Rowland told him to go out in right field and shag and this was his reply. 'I haven't never been in this park before so you will half to tell me which is right field.' Of course right field is the same field in all

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parks and that is what made the incidents so comical and some of the boys is certainly green when they first break in and we have manys the laugh at their expense."

That is what I wrote up for them Al and I wound it up with that little story and I was reading over what I wrote and Johnny Alcock seen me reading it and asked me to leave him see it so I showed it to him and he said it was great stuff and he hadn't never dreamt they was that much stragety in base-ball and he thought if some of the officers seen it they would pop their eyes out and they would want to talk to me and get my idears and see if maybe they couldn't some of them be plied to war fair and maybe if I showed them where it could I would get promoted and stuck on to the gen. staff that's all made up from gens. that lays out the attacks and etc.

Well Al Alcock is a pretty wise bird and a fine boy to if you know how to take him and he seen right off what I was getting at in my article and its true Al that the 2 games is like the other and quick thinking is what wins in both of them. But I am not looking for no staff job that you don't half to go up in the trenchs and fight but just lay around in some office somewheres and stick pins in a map while the rest of the boys is sticking bayonets in the Dutchmen's maps so I hope they don't none of the gens. see what I wrote because I come over

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here to fight and be a soldier and carry a riffle instead of a pin cushion.

But it don't hurt nothing for me to give them a few hints once in a wile about useing their brains if they have got them and if I can do any good with my articles in the papers why I would just as leaf wear my fingers to the bone writeing them up.

Your pal, JACK.

Somewheres in France, March 13.

FRIEND AL: Well Al I bet you will pretty near fall over in a swoon when you read what I have got to tell you. Before you get this letter you will probably all ready of got a coppy of the paper I told you about because it come out the day before yesterday and I sent you a coppy with my article in it only they cut a part of it out on acct. of not haveing enough space for all of it but they left the best part of it in.

Well Al somebody must of a sent a coppy to Gen. Pershing and marked up what I wrote up so as he would be sure and see it and probably one of the officers done it. Well that's either here or there but this afternoon when we come in they was a letter for me and who do you think it was from Al. Well you can't never even begin to guess so I will tell you. It was from Gen. Pershing Al and it come from Paris where he is at and I have got it here

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laying on the table and I would send it to you to look at only I wouldn't take no chances of looseing it and I don't mean you wouldn't be carefull of it Al but of course the mail has got to go across the old pond and if the Dutchmens periscoped the boat the letter was on it it would be good night letter and a letter like this here is something to be proud of and hold onto it and keep it for little Al till he grows up big enough to appreciate it. But they's nothing to prevent me from copping down the letter so as you can read what it says and here it is.

PRIVATE KEEFE,

Dear Sir: My attention was called today to an article written by you in your regimental paper under the title War and Baseball: Two Games Where Brains Wins. In this article you state that our generals would be better able to accomplish their task if they had enjoyed the benefits of strategic training in baseball. I have always been a great admirer of the national game of baseball and I heartily agree with what you say. But unfortunately only a few of us ever possessed the ability to play your game and the few never were proficient enough to play it professionally. Therefore the general staff is obliged to blunder along without that capacity for quick thinking which is acquired only on the baseball field.

But I believe in making use of all the talent in

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my army, even among the rank and file. Therefore I respectfully ask whether you think some of your baseball secrets would be of strategic value to us in the prosecution of this war and if so whether you would be willing to provide us with the same.

If it is not too much trouble, I would be pleased to hear from you along these lines, and if you have any suggestion to make regarding a campaign against our enemy, either offensive or defensive, I would be pleased to have you outline it in a letter to me.

By the way I note with pleasure that our first names are the same. It makes a sort of bond between us which I trust will be further cemented if you can be of assistance to me in my task.

I shall eagerly await your reply. Sincerely,

BLACK JACK PERSHING,
Folies Bergere, Paris, France.

That is the letter I got from him Al and I'll say its some letter and I bet if some of these smart alex officers seen it it would reduce some of the swelling in their chest but I consider the letter confidential Al and I haven't showed it to nobody only 3 or 4 of my buddys and I showed it to Johnny Alcock and he popped his eyes out so far you could of snipped them off with a shears. And he said it was a cinch that Pershing realy wrote it on acct. of him signing it Black Jack Pershing and they

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wouldn't nobody else sign it that way because it was a private nickname between he and some of his friends and they wouldn't nobody else know about it.

So then he asked was I going to answer the letter and I said of course I was and he says well I better take a whole lot of pains with my answer and study up the situation before I wrote it and put some good idears in it and if my letters made a hit with Gen. Pershing the next thing you know he would probably summons me to Paris and maybe stick me on the war board so as all I would half to do would be figure up plans of attacks and etc. and not half to go up in the trenchs and wrist my life and probably get splattered all over France.

So I said "Well I am not looking for no excuse to get out of the trenchs but its just the other way and I am nuts to get in them." So he says "You must be." But he showed me where it would be a great experience to set in at them meetings even if I didn't have much to say and just set there and listen and hear their plans and what's comeing off and besides I would get a chance to see something of Paris and it don't look like none of us only the officers would be give leave to go there but of course I would go if Black Jack wanted me and after all Al I am here to give Uncle Sam the best I have got and if I can serve the stars and strips better by sticking pins in a map then getting in the trenchs why all right and it takes more than

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common soldiers to win a war and if I am more use to them as a kind of adviser instead of carrying a bayonet why I will sacrifice my own feelings for the good of the cause like I often done in baseball.

But they's another thing Alcock told me Al and that is that the war board they have got has got gens. on it from all the different countrys like the U. S. and England and France and Spain and of course they are more French gens. than anything else on acct. of the war being here in France so probably they do some of their talking in French and Alcock says if he was I he would get busy and try and learn enough French so as I could make myself understood when I had something to say and of course they probably won't nothing come out of it all but still and all I always says its best to be ready for whatever comes off and if the U. S. had of been ready for this war I wouldn't be setting here writeing this letter now but I would be takeing a plunge in one of them Berlin brewry vats.

Any way I have all ready picked enough French so as I can talk it pretty good and I would be O. K. if I could understand it when they are talking it off but to hear them talk it off you would think they seen their dinner at the end of the sentence.

Well Al I will tell you how things comes out and I hope Black Jack will forget all about it and lay off me so as I can get into the real fighting instead of standing in front of a map all the wile like a

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school teacher or something and I all most wished I hadn't never wrote that article and then of course the idear wouldn't of never came to Black Jack that I could help him but if he does take me on his staff it will be some pair of Jacks eh Al and enough to open the pot and if the Germans is sucker enough to stay in they will get their whiskers cinched.

Your pal, JACK.

Somewheres in France, March 14.

FRIEND AL: Well this is the second letter I have wrote today and the other one is to Gen. Pershing and I have still got the letter here yet Al and I will coppy it down and tell you what I wrote to him.

GEN. JACK PERSHING,

Care Folies Bergere, Paris, France.

Dear Gen: You can bet I was supprised to get a letter from you and when I wrote that article I didn't have no idear that they would something come out of it. Well Gen. I come into the army expecting to fight and lay down my life if nessary and I am not one of the kind that are looking for an out and trying to hide behind a desk or something because I am afraid to go into the trenchs but I guess if you know something about baseball you won't accuse me from not having the old nerve

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because they can't no man hold onto a job in the big leagues unless a man is fearless and does their best work under fire and especially a pitcher. But if you figure that I can serve old glory better some other way then in the rank and files I am willing to sacrifice myself like I often done in baseball. Anything to win Gen. is the way I look at it.

You asked me in your letter did I think some of my idears would help out well gen. a man don't like to sound like they was bragging themself up but this isn't no time for monking and I guess you want the truth. Well gen. I don't know much about running a army and their plans but stragety is the same if its on the battle field or the baseball diamond you might say and it just means how can we beat them and I often say that the men that can use their brains will win any kind of a game except maybe some college Willy boy game like football or bridge whist.

Well gen. without no bragging myself up I learned a whole lot about stragety on the baseball field and I think I could help you in a good many ways but before I tried to tell you how to do something I would half to know what you was trying to do and of course I know you can't tell me in a letter on acct. of the censors and of course they are Americans to but they's a whole lot of the boys that don't mean no harm but they are gabby and can't keep their mouth shut and who knows who would

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get a hold of it and for the same reason I don't feel like I should give you any of my idears by mail but if I could just see you and we could have a little talk and talk things over but I don't suppose they's any chance of that unless I could get leave off to run down to Paris for a wile and meet you somewheres but they won't give us no leave to go to Paris but of course a letter from you that I could show it to Capt. Seeley would fix it up and no questions asked.

So I guess I better wait till I hear from you along these lines and in the mean wile I will be thinking the situation over and see what I can think up and I all ready got some idears that I feel like they would work out O. K. and I hope I will get a chance in the near future to have a little chat with you.

I note what you say about our name being both Jack and I was thinking to myself that lots of times in a poker game a pair of jacks is enough to win and maybe it will be the same way in the war game and any way I guess the 2 of us could put up a good bluff and bet them just as if we had them. Eh gen? Respy,

JACK KEEFE.

That's what I wrote to him Al and he will get it some time tomorrow or the next day and I should ought to hear from him back right away and I hope

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he will take my hint and leave me stay here with my regt. where I can see some real action. But if he summonses me I will go Al and not whine about getting a raw deal.

Well I happened to drop into a estaminet here yesterday and that's kind of a store where a man can buy stuff to take along with him or you can get a cup of coffee or pretty near anything and they was a girl on the job in there and she smiled when I come in and I smiled at her back and she seen I was American so she begin talking to me in English only she has got some brogue and its hard to make it out what she is trying to get at. Well we talked a wile and all of a sudden the idear come to me that I and her could hit it off and both do the other some good by her learning me French and I could learn her English and so I sprung it on her and she was tickled to death and we called it a bargain and tomorrow we are going to have our first lessons and how is that Al for a bargain when I can pick up French without it costing me a nickle and of course they won't be only time for 1 or 2 lessons before I hear from Black Jack but I can learn a whole lot in 2 lessons if she will tend to business but the way she smiled at me when I come out and the looks she give me I am afraid if she seen much of me it would be good night so I will half to show her I won't stand for no foolishness because

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She smiled when I came in and I smiled at her back

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I had enough flirtations Al and the next woman that looks X eyed at me will catch her death of cold.

Your pal, JACK.

Somewheres in France, March 16.

FRIEND AL: Well old pal it looks like they wouldn't be no front line trenchs for this baby and what I am getting at is that the word was past around today that Black Jack himself is comeing and they isn't no faulse alarm about it because Capt. Seeley told us himself and said Gen. Pershing would be here in a day or 2 to overlook us and he wanted that everybody should look their best and keep themself looking neat and clean and clean up all the billets and etc. because that was what Gen. Pershing was comeing to see, how we look and how we are getting along and etc.

Well Al that's what Capt. Seeley said but between you and I they's another reason why he is comeing and I guess he figures they will be a better chance to talk things over down here then if I was to go to Paris and I am not the only one that knows why he is comeing because after supper Alcock called me over to 1 side and congratulated me and said it looked like I was in soft.

Well I will be ready for him when he comes and I will be ready to pack up and blow out of here at a minute's notice and I can't help from wondring

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what some of these smart alex officers will say when they see what's comeing off. So this won't be only a short letter Al because I have got a lot to do to get ready and what I am going to do is write down some of my idears so as I can read them off to him when he comes and if I didn't have them wrote down I might maybe get nervous when I seen him and maybe forget what I got to say because the boys says he's a tough bird for a man to see for the first time till you get to know him and he acts like he was going to eat you alive but he's a whole lot like a dog when you get to know him and his bark is worse then a bite.

Well Al how is that for news and I guess you will be prouder then ever of your old pal before this business gets over with and I would feel pretty good with everything breaking so good only I am getting worred about Ernestine that little French gal in the estaminet and I wished now I hadn't never seen her or made no bargain with her and I didn't do it so much for what I could learn off of her but these French gals Al has had a tough time of it and if a man can bring a little sunshine into their life he wouldn't be a man unless he done it. So I was just trying to be a good fellow and here is what I get for it because I caught her today Al with that look in her eye that I seen in so many of them and I know what it means and I guess about the best thing for me to do is run away from

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Gen. Pershing and go over the top or something and leave the boshs shoot my nose off or mess me up some way and then maybe I won't get pestered to death every time I try and be kind to some little gal.

I guess the French lessons will half to be cut out because it wouldn't be square to leave her see me again and it would be different if I could tell her I am married but I don't know the French terms for it and besides it don't seem to make no difference to some of them and the way they act you would think a wife was just something that come out on you like a sty and the best way to do was just to forget it.

Well Al as I say I caught her looking at me like it was breaking her heart and I wouldn't be supprised if she cried after I come away, but what can a man do about it Al and I have got a good notion to wear my gas mask everywhere I go and then maybe I will have a little peace once in a wile.

I must close now for this time and get busy on some idears so as Black Jack won't catch me flat footed but I guess they's no danger of that eh Al?

Your pal, JACK.

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Somewheres in France, March 18.

FRIEND AL: Well old pal I am all set for Gen. Pershing when he comes and I have got some of my idears wrote down just the bear outlines of them and when he asks me if I have got any I can just read them off from my notes like I was a lecture and here is a few of the notes I have got wrote down so you can get some idear of what I am going to spring on him.

1

In baseball many big league mgrs. before a game they talk it over in the club house with their men and disgust the weakness of the other club and how is the best way to beat them and etc. For inst. when I was pitching for the White Sox and suppose we was going to face a pitcher that maybe he was weak on fielding bunts so before the game Mgr. Rowland would say to us "Remember boys this baby so and so gets the rabbis if you lay down bunts on him." So we would begin laying them down on him and the first thing you know he would be frothing at the mouth and triping all over himself and maybe if he did finely get a hold of the ball he would throw it into the Southren League or somewheres and before the other mgr. could get another bird warmed up they would half to hire a

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crossing policeman to straiten out the jam at the plate. And the same thing would be in war like in baseball and instead of a army going into it blind you might say, why the gens. ought to get together before the battle and fix it up to work on the other side's weakness. For inst. suppose the Germans is weak on getting out of the way of riffle bullets why that's the weapon to use on them and make a sucker out of them.

2

Getting the jump on your oppts. is more then ½ the battle whether its in the war or on the baseball field and many a game has been win by getting the jump on your oppts. For inst. that reminds me of a little incidents that happened one day when we was playing the Washington club and I was pitching against the notorious Walter Johnson and before they was a man out Geo. McBride booted one and Collins and Jackson got a couple hits and we was 2 runs to the good before they was a man out. Well Johnson come back pretty good and the rest of the game the boys acted like they was scared of him and kept one foot in the water bucket but we would of win the game at that only in the 9th. inning Schalk dropped a third strike on me and Judge and Milan hit a couple of fly balls that would of been easy outs only for the wind but the wind raised havioc with the ball and they both went

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for hits and they beat us 3 to 2 and that's the kind of luck I genally always had against the Washington club.

3

In baseball of course they's only nine men on a side and that is where a gen. in the war has got the advantage on a mgr. in baseball because they's no rules in war fair to keep a man from useing all the men he feels like so it looks to me like a gen. had all the best of it because suppose the other side only had say 50 thousand men in a certain section they's nothing to prevent a gen. from going after them with a 100 thousand men and if he can't run them ragged when you got to them 2 to 1 its time to enlist in the G. A. R. All though as I say a mgr. can't only use nine men at a time in baseball, but at that I know of incidents where a mgr. has took advantage of the oppts. being shy of men and one time the St. Louis club came to Chi and Jones was all crippled up for pitchers but the game was on our home grounds so it was up to Mgr. Rowland to say if the game should be played or if he should call it off on acct. of cold weather because it was in the spring. But he knowed Jones was shy of pitchers so he made him play the game and Jones used big Laudermilk to pitch against us and they beat us 5 and 2.

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4

Another advantage where a gen. got it on a baseball mgr. because in baseball the game begins at 3 o'clock and the other club knows when its going to begin just the same as your club so they can't neither club beat the other one to it and start the game wile the other club is looking out the window.

But a gen. don't half to tell the other side when he is going to attack them but of course they have observers that can see when you are going to get ready to pull something. But it looks to me like the observers wouldn't be worth a hoop and he—ll if the other gen. made his preparations at night when it was dark like bringing up the troops and artilery and supplys and etc. and in that way you could take them by supprise and make them look like a fool, like in baseball I have often crossed the batter up and one day I had Cobb 3 and 2 and he was all set to murder a fast one and I dinked a slow one up there to him and the lucky stiff hit it on the end of his bat just inside third base and 2 men scored on it.

That's about the idears I am going to give him Al only of course I can talk it off better then I can write it because wile I am talking I can think up a lot more incidents to tell him and him being a

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baseball fan he will set there pop eyed with his mouth open as long as I want to talk. But now I can't hardly wait for him to get here Al and it seems funny to think that here I am a $30 dollar a mo. doughboy and maybe in a few days I will be on the staff and they don't have nobody only officers and even a lieut. gets 5 or 6 times as much as a doughboy and how is that for a fine nickname Al for men that all the dough they are getting is a $1 per day and the pollutes only gets 2 Sues a day and that's about 2 cents so I suppose we ought to call them the Wall St. crowd.

Well Al you should ought to be thankfull you are there at home with your wife where you can watch her and keep your eyes on her and find out what she is doing with her spare time though I guess at that they wouldn't be much danger of old Bertha running a muck and I don't suppose she would half to wear bob wire entanglements to keep Jack the Kisser away but when a man has got a wife like Florrie and here I am over here and there she is over there well Al a man don't get to sleep no quicker nights from thinking about it and I lay there night after night and wonder what and the he—ll can she be doing and she might be doing most anything Al and they's only the one thing that its a cinch she ain't doing and that's writeing a letter to me and a man would pretty near think she had forgot my first name but even at that she could set

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down and write to me and start it out Dear Husband.

But the way she acts why even if they was any fun over here I wouldn't be haveing it and suppose I do get on Gen. Pershing's staff and get a lieut. or something and write and tell her about it, why she would probably wait till a legal holiday to answer me back and then she would write about 10 words and say she went to the Palace last week and when she come out after the show it was raining.

Well Al you can't blame a man for anything he pulls off when their wife acts like that and if I give that little Ernestine a smack the next time she bulges her lips out at me whose fault is it Al? Not mine. Your pal, JACK.

Somewheres in France, March 20.

FRIEND AL: Well Al the sooner the Germans starts their drive let them come and I only hope we are up there when they start it and believe me Al if they come at us with the gas I will dive into it with my mouth wide open and see how much of it I can get because they's no use Al of a man trying to live with the kind of luck I have got and I'm sick in tired of it all.

Wait till you hear what come off today Al. In the first place my feet's been going back on me for a long wile and they walked us all over France yes-

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terday and this A. M. I couldn't hardly get my shoes on and they was going out for riffle practice and I don't need no riffle practice Al and besides that I couldn't of stood it so I got excused and I set around a wile after the rest of the bunch was gone and finely my feet got feeling a little better and I walked over to the estaminet where that little gal's at to see if maybe I couldn't brighten things up a little for her and sure enough she was all smiles when she seen me and we talked a wile about this in that and she tried to get personal and called me cherry which is like we say dearie and finely I made the remark that I didn't think we would be here much longer and then I seen she was going to blubber so I kind of petted her hand and stroked her hair and she poked her lips out and I give her a smack Al but just like you would kiss a kid or something after they fell down and hurt themself. Well Al just as this was comeing off the door to the other part of the joint opened up and in come her old man and seen it and I thought all Frenchmens talked fast Al but this old bird made them sound like a impediment and he come at me and if he hadn't been so old I would of crowned him but of course I couldn't do nothing only let him rave and finely I felt kind of sorry for him and I had a 20 frank note on me so I shoved it at him and it struck him dumb Al and I got out of there and come back to the Ark and it seems like I had been away

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a whole lot longer then I meant to and any way I hadn't hardly no more then got my shoes off and layed down when in come some of the boys.

Well Al what do you think? Gen. Pershing was out there to the riffle practice to overlook them and I suppose he heard we was going to be out there and he went out there to be sure and catch me and he was makeing a visit around the camp and instead of him stopping here he went out there to see us and instead of me being out there Al, here I was mixed up in a riot with an old goof over nothing you might say and Black Jack wondring where and the he—ll could I be at because Alcock told me he noticed him looking around like he mist somebody. And now he's on his way back to Paris and probably sore as a boil and I can't do nothing only wait to hear from him and probably he will just decide to pass me up.

And the worst of it is Al that when they brought us the mail they was 2 letters for me from Florrie and I couldn't of asked for nicer letters if I had wrote them myself only why and the he—ll couldn't she of wrote them a day sooner and I would of no more thought of getting excused today then fly because if I had knew how my Mrs. mist me and how much she cares I wouldn't of been waisting no time on no Ernestine but its to late now and Black Jack's gone and so is my 20 franks and believe me Al 20 frank notes is tray pew over here. I'll say they are. Your pal, JACK.

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CHAPTER IV

DECORATED

Somewheres in France, April 2.

FRIEND AL: Well Al yesterday was April Fool and you ought to seen what I pulled on 1 of the boys Johnny Alcock and it was a screen and some of the boys is still laughing over it yet but he is 1 of the kind that he can't see a joke at their own expenses and he swelled up like a poison pup and now he is talking about he will get even with me, but the bird that gets even with me will half to get up a long time before revelry eh Al.

Well Al I will tell you what I pulled on him and I bet you will bust your sides. Well it seems like Johnny has got a girl in his home town Riverside, Ill. near Chi and that is he don't know if he has got her or not because him and another bird was both makeing a play for her, but before he come away she told him to not worry, but the other bird got himself excused out of the draft with a cold sore or something and is still there in the old town yet where he can go and call on her every night and she is libel to figure that maybe she better marry,

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him so as she can have some of her evenings to herself and any way she might as well of told Johnny to not scratch himself over here as to not worry because for some reason another the gal didn't write to him last month at lease he didn't get no letters and maybe they got lost or she had writers cramps or something but any way every time the mail come and nothing for him he looked like he had been caught off second base.

Well the day before yesterday he was reading 1 of the letters he got from this baby 5 or 6 wks. ago on acct. of not haveing nothing better to read and he left the envelope lay on the floor and I was going to hand it back to him but I happened to think that yesterday would be April Fool so I kept a hold of the envelope and I got a piece of paper and wrote April Fool on it and stuck it in the envelope and fixed it up so as it would look like a new letter and I handed it to him yesterday like it was mail that had only just came for him and you ought to see him when he tore it open and didn't find nothing only April Fool in it. At first he couldn't say nothing but finely he says "That's some comedy Keefe. You ought to be a end man in the stretcher bearers minstrels" and he didn't crack a smile so I said "What's the matter with you can't you take a joke?" So he said "What I would like to take is a crack at your jaw." So I said "Well it's to bad your arms is both paralyzed." Well Al they's noth-

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ing the matter with his arms and I was just kidding him because as far as him hitting anybody is conserned I was just as safe as the gen. staff because he ain't much bigger than a cutie and for him to reach my jaw he would half to join the aviation.

Well of course he didn't start nothing but just said he would get back at me if it took him till the duration of the war and I told some of the other boys about putting it over on him and they couldn't hardly help from smileing but he acts like a baby and don't speak to me and I suppose maybe he thinks that makes me feel bad but I got to be 25 yrs. old before I ever seen him and if his head was blowed off tomorrow A. M. I would try and show up for my 3 meals a day if you could call them that.

But speaking about April Fool Al I just stopped writeing to try and light a cigarette with 1 of these here French matchs and every one of them is a April Fool and I guess the parents of the kids over here don't never half to worry about them smokeing to young because even if they had a box of cigarettes hid in their cradle they would be of age before they would run across a match that lit and I wouldn't be scared to give little Al a bunch and turn him loose in a bbl. of gasoline.

Well Al I suppose you been reading in the papers about the Dutchmens starting a drive vs. the English up in the northren part of the section and at first it looked like the English was going to

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leave them walk into the Gulf Stream and scald themself to death, but now it seems like we have got them slowed up at lease that's the dope we get here but for all the news we get a hold of we might as well of jumped to the codfish league on the way over and once in a wile some of the boys gets a U. S. paper a mo. old but they hog onto it and don't leave nobody else see it but as far as I am conserned they can keep it because I haven't no time to waist reading about the Frisco fair or the Federal League has blowed up and etc. And of course they's plenty of newspapers from Paris but all printed in la la la so as every time you come to a word you half to rumage through a dictionary and even when you run it down its libel to mean 20 different articles and by the time you figured out whether they are talking about a st. car or a hot bath or a raisin or what and the he—ll they are talking about they wouldn't be no more news to it then the bible and it looks to me Al like it would be a good idear if you was to drop me a post card when the war is over so as I can tell Capt. Seeley or he will still be running us ragged to get in shape a couple of yrs. after the last of the Dutchmens lays molting in the grave.

Jokeing to 1 side Al you probably know what's going on a long wile before we do and the only chance we would have to know how a battle come out would be if we was in it and they's no chance

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of that unless they send us up to the northern part of the section to help out because Van Hindenburg must have something under his hat besides bristles and he ain't a sucker enough to start driveing vs. the front that we are behind it unless he is so homesick that he can't stand it no longer in France.

Your pal, JACK.

Somewheres in France, April 6.

FRIEND AL: Well Al 1 of the Chi newspapers is getting out a paper in Paris and printed in English and I just seen a copy of it where the Allys has finely got wise to themself and made 1 man gen. of all the Allys and it was a sucker play to not do that long ago only it looks to me like they pulled another boner by makeing a Frenchman the gen. and I suppose they done it for a complement to the Frenchmens on acct. of the war being here, but even suppose this here Foch is a smart gen. and use his brains and etc. it looks to me like it would of been a whole lot better to of picked out a man that can speak English because suppose we was all in a big battle or something and he wanted we should go over the top and if he said it in French why most of the boys hasn't made no attempts to master the language and as far as they was conserned he might as well be telling them to wash their neck. Or else they would half to be

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interpeters to translate it out in English what he was getting at and by the time he give the orders to fire and the interpeter looked it up and seen what it meant in English and then tell us about it the Dutchmens would be putting peep holes through us with a bayonet and besides the French word for fire in English is feu in French and you say it like it was few and if Gen. Foch yelled few we might think he was complaining of the heat.

But at that its better to have 1 man running it even a Frenchman then a lot of different gens. telling us to do this in that and the other thing every one of them different and suppose they done that in baseball Al and a club had 3 or 4 mgrs. and suppose for inst. it come up to the 9th. inning and we needed some runs and it was Benz's turn to hit and 1 mgr. would tell him to go up and hit for himself and another mgr. would tell Murphy to go up and hit for him and another mgr. would send Risberg up and another would send Russell and the next thing you know they would be 2 of them swinging from 1 side of the plate and 2 from the other side and probably busting each other in the bean with their bats but you take most bird's beans and what would break would be Mr. Bat. But its the same in war like in baseball and you got to have 1 man running it. With a lot of different gens. in command, 1 of them might tell the men to charge while another was telling them to pay cash.

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Jokeing to 1 side Al some of our boys have overtook a section up along the Moose river and I wouldn't dast write about it only its been printed in the papers all ready so I am not giveing away no secrets to the Dutchmens. At lease they don't mind us writeing something that's came out in the papers though as far as I can see how would the Dutchmens know it any more if it was in the papers or not, because they ain't so choked with jack over in Germany that they are going to spend it on U. S. papers a mo. old and even when they got them they would half to find somebody that could read English and hadn't been killed for it and it would be like as if I should spend part of my $15 a mo. subscribeing to the Chop Suey Bladder that you would half to lay on your stomach and hold it with your feet to get it right side up and even then it wouldn't mean nothing. But any way the Dutchmens is going to know sooner or later that we are in the war and what's the differents if they meet us at the Moose or the Elks? Jokeing a side Al I guess you won't be supprised to hear how I have picked up in the riffle practice and I knew right along that I couldn't hardly help from being a A No. 1 marksman because a man that had almost perfect control in pitching you might say would be bound to shoot straight when they got the hang of it and don't be supprised if I write you 1 of these days that I been appointed a snipper that

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sets up in a tree somewheres and picks off the boshs whenever they stick their head up and they call them snippers so pretty soon my name is libel to be Jake Snipe instead of Jack Keefe, but seriously Al I can pick off them targets like they was cherrys or something and maybe I won't half to go in the trenchs at all.

I guess I all ready told you about that little trick I pulled on Johnny Alcock for a April Fool gag and at first he swelled up like a poison pup and wouldn't talk to me and said he wouldn't never rest till he got even. Well he finely got a real letter from the gal back home and she is still waiting for him yet so he feels O. K. again and I and him are on speaking turns again and I am glad to not be scraping with him because I don't never feel right unless I am pals with everybody but they can't nobody stay sore at me very long and even when some of the boys in baseball use to swell up when I pulled 1 of my gags on them it wouldn't last long because I would just smile at them and they would half to smile back and be pals and I always say that if a man can't take a joke he better take acid or something and make a corps out of himself instead of a monkey. Your pal, JACK.

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Somewheres in France, April 11.

FRIEND AL: Well Al I don't suppose you knew I was a detective but when it comes to being a dick it looks like I don't half to salute Wm. Burns or Shylock or none of them.

Seriously Al I come onto something today that may turn out to be something big and then again it may not but it looks like it was something big only of course it has got to be kept a secret till I get the goods on a certain bird and I won't pull it till I have got him right and in that way he won't suspect nothing until its to late. But I know you wouldn't breath a word about it and besides it wouldn't hurt nothing if you did because by the time you get this letter the whole thing will be over and this bird to who I refer will probably own a peace of land in France with a 2 ft. frontidge and 6 ft. deep. But you will wonder what am I trying to get at so maybe I better explain myself.

Well Al they's a big bird in our Co. name Geo. Shaffer and that's a German name because look at Schaefer that use to play ball in our league and it was spelt different but they called him Germany and he thought he was funny and use to pull gags on the field but I guess he didn't feel so funny the day Griffith sent him up to hit against me in the pinch 1 day at Washington and if the ball he hit had of went straight out instead of straight up it

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would of pretty near cleared the infield. But any way this bird Shaffer in our Co. is big enough to have a corporal to himself and they must of spent the first Liberty Loan on his uniform and he hasn't hardly said a word since we been in France and for a wile we figured it was just because he was a crab and to grouchy to talk, but now I wouldn't be supprised Al if the real reason was on acct. of him being a Dutchman and maybe can't talk English very good. Well I would feel pretty mean to be spying on most of the boys that's been good pals with me, but when a man is a pro German spy himself they's no question of friendship and etc. and whatever I can do to show this bird up I won't hesitate a minute.

Well Al this bird was writeing a letter last night and he didn't have no envelope and he asked me did I have 1 and I said no and he wouldn't of never spoke only to say Gimme but when I told him I didn't have no envelope he started off somewheres to get 1 and he dropped the last page out of the letter he had been writeing and it was laying right there along side of me and of course I wouldn't of paid no tension to it only it was face up so as I couldn't help from seeing it and what I seen wasn't no words like a man would write in a letter but it was a bunch of marks like a x down at the bottom and they was a whole line of them like this

x x x x x x x x x x x

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Well that roused up my suspicions and I guess you know I am not the kind that reads other people's letters even if I don't get none of my own to read but this here letter I kind of felt like they was something funny about it like he was writeing in ciphers or something so I picked the page up and read it through and sure enough they was parts of it in ciphers and if a man didn't have the key you couldn't tell what and the he—ll he was getting at.

Well Al I was still studing the page yet when he come back in and they wasn't nothing for me to do only set on it so as he wouldn't see I had it and he come over and begin looking for it and I asked him had he lost something to throw him off the track and he said yes but he didn't say what it was and that made it all the more suspicious so he finely give up looking and went out again.

Well I have got it put away where he can't get a hold of it because I showed it to Johnny Alcock this A. M. and asked him if it didn't look like something off color and he said yes it did and if he was me he would turn it over to Capt. Seeley but on 2d thoughts he said I better keep it a wile and at the same time keep a eye on Shaffer and get more evidents vs. him and then when I had him dead to rights I could turn the letter and the rest of the evidents over to Capt. Seeley and then I would be sure to get the credit for showing him up.

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Well Al I figure this 1 page of his letter is enough or more then enough only of course its best to play safe and keep my eyes pealed and see what comes off and I haven't got time to copy down the whole page Al and besides they's a few sentences that sounds O. K. and I suppose he put them in for a blind but you can't get away from them x marks Al and I will write down a couple other sentences and I bet you will agree that they's something fishy about them and here is the sentences to which I refer:

"In regards to your question I guess I understand O. K. In reply will say yes I. L. Y. more than Y. L. M. Am I right."

"Have you saw D. Give him a ring and tell the old spinort I am W. C. T. U. outside of a little Vin Blank."

Can you make heads or tales out of that Al? I guess not and neither could anybody else except they had the key to it and the best part of it is his name is signed down at the bottom and if he can explain that line of talk he is a wonder but he can't explain it Al and all as he can do is make a clean brest of the whole business and Alcock thinks the same way and Alcock says he wished he had of been the 1 that got a hold of this evidents because whoever turned it over to Capt. Seeley along with what other facts I can get a hold of will just about get a commission in the intel-

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ligents dept. and that's the men that looks after the pro German spys Al and gets the dope on them and shows them up and I would probably have my head quarters in Paris and get good money besides my expenses and I would half to pass up the chance to get in the trenchs and fight but they's more ways of fighting then 1 and in this game Al a man has got to go where they send you and where they figure they would do the most good and if my country needs me to track after spys I will sacrifice my own wishs though I would a whole lot rather stay with my pals and fight along side of them and not snoop round Paris fondleing door nobs like a night watchman. But Alcock says he would bet money that is where I will land and he says "You ought to feel right at home in the intelligents dept. like a camel in Lake Erie" and he says the first chance I get I better try and start up a conversation with Shaffer and try and lead him on and that is the way they trap them is to ask them a whole lot of questions and see what they have got to say and if you keep fireing questions at them they are bound to get balled up and then its good night.

Well I don't suppose it seems possible to you stay at homes that they could be such a thing like a pro German spy in the U. S. army and how did he get there and why did they leave him in and etc. Well Al you would be supprised to know how

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many of them has slipped in and Alcock says that at first it amounted to about 200% but the intelligents officers has been on their sent all the wile and most of them has been nailed and when they get them they shoot them down like a dog and that's what Shaffer will get Al and he is out of luck to be so big because all as the fireing squad would half to do would be look at their compass and see if he was east or west of them and then face their riffle in that direction and let go.

I will write and let you know how things comes along. Your pal, JACK.

Somewheres in France, April 14.

FRIEND AL: Well Al I am closeing the net of evidents around Shaffer and I guess I all ready got enough on him to make out a case that he couldn't never wrinkle out of it but Capt. Seeley is away and I can't do nothing till he gets back.

I had my man on the grill today Al and I thought he would be a fox and not criminate himself but I guess I went at him so smooth he didn't never suspect nothing till along towards the finish and then it was to late. I don't remember all that was said but it run along these lines like as follows: In the first place I asked him where he lived and he said Milwaukee Ave. in Chi and I don't know if you know it or not Al but that's a st. where they

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have got traffic policemens at the corners to blow their whistles once for the Germans to go north and south and twice for them to go east and west. So then I said was he married and he says no. So then I asked him where he was born and he said "What and the he—ll are you the personal officer?" So I laughed it off and said "No but I thought maybe we come from the same part of the country." So he says something about everybody didn't half to come from the country but he wouldn't come out and say where he did come from so then I kind of led around to the war and I made the remark that the German drive up on the north side of France didn't get very far and he says maybe they wasn't through. How was that for a fine line of talk Al and he might as well have said he hoped the Germans wouldn't never be stopped.

Well for a minute I couldn't hardly help from takeing a crack at him but in these kind of matters Al a man has got to keep a hold of themself or they will loose their quarry so I kind of forced a smile and said "Well I guess they would have kept going if they could of." And then he says "Yes but they half to stop every once in a wile to bring up Van Hindenburg." So I had him traped Al and quick is a flash I said "Who told you their plans?" And he says "Oh he—ll my mother in law" and walked away from me.

Well Al it was just like sometimes when they

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are trying a man for murder and he says he couldn't of did it because he was over to the Elite jazing when it come off and a little wile later the lawyer asks him where did he say he was at when the party was croked and he forgets what he said the 1st. time and says he was out to Lincoln Pk. kidding the bison or something and the lawyer points out to the jury where his storys don't jib and the next thing you know he is dressed up in a hemp collar a couple sizes to small.

And that's the same way I triped Shaffer getting him to say he wasn't married and finely when I have him cornered he busts out about his mother in law. Well Al I don't know of no way to get a mother in law without marrying into one. So I told Alcock tonight what had came off and he says it looked to him like I had a strong case and if he was me he would spill it to Capt. Seeley the minute he gets back. And he said "You lucky stiff you won't never see the inside of a front line trench." So I asked him what he meant and he repeated over again what he said about them takeing me in the intelligents dept. So it looks like I was about through being a doughboy Al and pretty soon I will probably be writeing to you from Paris but I don't suppose I will be able to tell you what I am doing because that's the kind of a job where mum is the word. Your pal,

JACK.

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Somewheres in France, April 16.

FRIEND AL: Well old pal don't be supprised if I write you the next time from Paris. I have got a date to see Capt. Seeley tomorrow and Lieut. Mather fixed it up for me to see him but I had to convince the lieut. that it wasn't no monkey business because they's always a whole lot of riffs and raffs asking Capt. Seeley can they have a word with him and what they want is to borry his knife to pair their finger nails.

But I guess he won't be sorry he seen me Al not when I show him the stuff I have got on this bird and he will probably shake me by the hand and say "Well Keefe Uncle Sam is proud of you but you are waisting your time here and I will be sorry to loose you but it looks like you belong in other fields." And he will wire a telegram to the gen. staff reccomending me to go to Paris.

I guess I all ready told you some of the stuff I have got on this bird but I have not told you all because the best one didn't only happen last night. Well on acct. of I and Alcock being friends he has kind of been keeping a eye pealed on Shaffer to help me out and he found a letter last night that Shaffer had wrote and this time it was the whole letter with the address and everything and who do you suppose it was to? Well Al it was to Van Hindenburg himself and I have got it right here

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where I can keep a eye on it and believe me it's worth watching and I wished I could send it to you so you could see for yourself what kind of a bird we are dealing with. But that's impossible Al but they's nothing to keep me from copping it off.

Well the letter is wrote in German and to show you what a foxy bird he is he wrote it out in printing so as if it got found by somebody they couldn't prove he wrote it because when words is wrote out in printing it looks just the same who ever wrote it and you can't tell. But he wasn't foxy enough to not sign G. S. down to the bottom of it and that stands for his name George Shaffer and he is the only G. S. in the Co. so it looks like we had him up in a tree. Here is what the letter says:

"Field Marshall Van Hindenburg, c/o Die Vierten Dachshunds, Deutscher Armee, Flanders. 500,000 U. S. Soldaten schon in Frankreich doch. In Lauterbach habe Ich mein Strumpf verloren und ohne Strumpf gehe Ich nicht heim. xxxxxxx G. S."

Notice them x marks again Al like in the other letter and the other letter was probably to Van Hindenburg to and I only wished I knew what the x marks means but maybe some of the birds that's all ready in the intelligents dept. can figure it out. But they's no mystery about the rest of it Al because Alcock understands German and he translated

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it out what the German words means and here is what it means:

500,000 United States soldiers in France all ready yet. Will advise you when to attack on this front.

How is that Al for a fine trader and spy to tell the gen. of the German army how many soldiers we got over here and to not attack till Shaffer says the word and he was probably going to say it wile we was all asleep or something. But thanks to me Al he will be the one that is asleep and it will be some sleep Al and it will make old Rip and Winkle look like they had the colic and when the boys finds out what I done for them I guess they won't be nothing to good for me. But it will be to late for them to show their appreciations because I won't be here no more and the boys probably won't see me again till its all over and we are back in the old U. S. because Alcock was talking to a bird that's in the int. dept. and he says 1 of their dutys was to keep away from everybody and not leave them know who you are. Because of course if word got out that you was a spy chaser the spys wouldn't hardly run up and kiss you on the st. but they would duck when they seen you and you would have as much chance to catch them as though you was trolling for wales with a grass hopper.

And from this bird's dope that Alcock was talking to I will half to leave off my uniform and wear

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plain close and maybe wear false whiskers and etc. so as people who see me the 1st. time I will look different to them the next time they see me and maybe I will half to let my mustache grow and grease it so as they will think maybe I am a Dutchman and if they are working for the Kaiser I could maybe pump them.

But they's 1 thing I don't like about it Al because Alcock says Paris is full of women that isn't exactly spys but they have been made a fool out of and they are some German's duke but the Dutchmens tells them a whole lot of things that Uncle Sam would like to know and I would half to find them things out and the only way to do that would be to get them stuck on me and I guess that wouldn't be no chore but when a gal gets stuck on you they will tell you everything they know and wile with most gals I ever seen they could do that without dropping another nickle still and all it would be different with these gals in Paris that's been the tools of some Dutchmens because you take a German and he don't never stop braging till he inhales a bayonet.

But it don't seem fair to make love to them and pertend like I was nuts over them and then when I had learned all they was to know I would half to get rid of them and cast them to 1 side and god knows how many wounds I will leave behind me but probably as many as though I was a regular

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soldier or snipper but then I wouldn't feel so bad about it because it would be men and not girlies but everything goes in war fair as they say Al and if Uncle Sam and Gen. Pershing asks me to do it I will do whatever they ask me and they can't nobody really hold it vs. me because of why I am doing it.

But talking about snippers Al I noticed today that I wasn't near as good as usual in the riffle practice and it was like as if I was haveing a slump like some of the boys does in baseball when they go along 5 or 6 days without finding out who is umpireing the bases and I am afraid that is how it would be with me in snipping I would be O. K. part of the time and the rest of the time I couldn't hit Europe and maybe I would fall down when they was depending on me and then I would feel like a rummy so I guess I better not try and show up so good in practice even when I do feel O. K. because they might make a snipper out of me without knowing my weakness and I figure its something the matter with my eyes. Besides Al it don't seem like its a fair game to be pecking away at somebody that they can't see you and aren't looking for no supprise and its a whole lot different then fighting with a bayonet where its man to man and may the best man win.

Well Al I guess I have told you all the news and things is going along about as usual and they don't

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When a gal gets stuck on you they will tell you everything they know

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seem to be no prospects of us overtakeing a section up to the front but its just train and train and train and if the ball clubs had a training trip like we been haveing they would be so tired by the 1 of May that they wouldn't run out a base on balls. Yesterday we past by a flock of motor Lauras that was takeing wounded back to a base hospital somewheres and Alcock was talking to 1 of the drivers and he said that over 100% of the birds that's getting wounded and killed these days is the snippers and the boshs don't never rest till they find out where there nests is at and then they get all their best marksmens and aim at where they think the snipper has got his nest and then its good night snipper and he is either killed right out or looses a couple of legs or something. I certainly feel sorry for the boys that's wounded Al and every time we see a bunch of them all us boys is crazy to get up there to the front and get even for what they done.

Well old pal I will half to get busy now and overlook the dope I have got on Shaffer so as I will have everything in order for Capt. Seeley and I will write and let you know how things comes out.

Your pal, JACK.

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Somewheres in France, April 18.

FRIEND AL: Well Al they's a whole lot of birds that thinks they are wise and always trying to pull off something on somebody but once in a wile they pick out the wrong bird to pull it on and then the laugh is on the smart Alex themself.

Well Alcock and some of them thought they was putting up a game on me and was going to make me look like a monkey but before I get through with them Al they will be the suckers and I will be giveing them the horse laugh but what I ought to do is bust them in the jaw and if I was running this war every bird that tried to pull off some practical joke to put a man in bad, I would give a lead shower in their honor some A. M. before breakfast.

Alcock was trying to make me believe that 1 of the boys in the Co. name Geo. Shaffer was a German spy or something and they framed up a letter like as if he wrote it to Van Hindenburg giveing away secrets in German about our army and etc. but they made the mistake of signing his initials to the letter so when I come to think it over I seen it must be a fake because a bird that was a real spy wouldn't never sign their own name to a letter but they would sign John Smith or something.

But any way I had a hold of this letter and a

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peace of another letter that Shaffer really did write it and I thought I would show them to Capt. Seeley and play it safe because they might be something in them after all and any way it would give him a good laugh. So yesterday I went and seen him and he says "Well Keefe what can I do for you?" So I said "You can't do nothing for me sir but this time I can do something for you. What would you think if I told you they was a trader and a German spy in your Co." So he says "I would think you were crazy." So I said "I am afraid you will half to think so then but maybe you won't think I am so crazy when I show you the goods."

So then Al I pulled that 1st. peace of a letter on him and showed it to him and he read it and when he got through he says "Well it looks suspicious all right. It looks like the man that wrote it was hacking up a big plot to spring a few dependents on his local board the next time they draft him." So I said "The bird that wrote that letter is a Dutchman name Geo. Shaffer." So Capt. Seeley says "Well I wish him all the luck in the world and a lot of little Shaffers." So I said "Yes but what about them x marks and all them letters without no words to them?" So he said "Didn't you never correspond with a girl and put some of them xs down to the bottom of your letter?" So I says "I have wrote letters to a whole lot of girls but I never had to write nothing in ciphers because

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I wasn't never ashamed of anything I wrote." So he said "Well your lady friends was all cheated then because this is ciphers all right but its the kind of messages they love to read because it means kisses."

Well Al of course I knew it meant something like that but I didn't think a big truck horse like Shaffer would make such a mushmellow out of himself. But anyway I said to Capt. Seeley I says "All right but what about them other initials without no words to go with them?" And he says "Well that's some more ciphers but they's probably a little gal out in Chi that don't half to look at no key to figure it out."

So then I pulled the other letter on him the 1 in German and he also smiled when he read this one and finely he says "Some of your pals has been playing a trick on you like when you come over on the ship and the best thing you can do is to tear the letters up and keep it quite and don't leave nobody know you fell for it. And now I have got a whole lot to tend to so good by."

So that's all that was said between us and I come away and come back to quarters and Alcock and 2 or 3 of the other boys was there and Alcock knew where I had been and I suppose he had told the other birds and they was all set to give me the Mary ha ha but I beat them to it.

"Well Alcock" I says when I come in "you are

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some joke Smith but you wouldn't think you was so funny if I punched your jaw." So he turned kind of pail but he forced a smile and says "Well I guess the Vin Blank is on you this time." So I said "You won't get no Vin Blank off me but what you are libel to get is a wallop in the jaw." So he says "You crabbed at me a wile ago for not takeing a joke but it looks like you was the one that couldn't take them now." So I said "What I would like to take is a poke at your nose." So that shut him up and they didn't none of them get their laugh because I had them scared and if they had of laughed I would of made them swallow it.

So after all Al the laugh is on them because their gag fell dead and I guess the next time they try and pull some gag they will pick out some hick from some X roads to pull it on and not a bird that has traveled all over the big leagues and seen all they is to see.

Well Al I am tickled to death I won't half to give up my uniform and snoop around Paris like a white wings double crossing women and spying and etc. and even if the whole thing hadn't of been just a joke I was going to ask Capt. Seeley to not reccomend me to no int. dept. but jest leave me be where I am at so as when the time comes I can fight fair like man to man and not behind no woman's skirts like a cur.

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So you see Al everything is O. K. after all and the laugh is on Alcock and his friends because they was the ones that expected to do all the laughing but instead of that I made a monkey out of them.

Your pal,

JACK.

Somewheres in France, April 23.

FRIEND AL: Well Al if you would see my face you would think I had been attending a barrage or something or else I had been in a bar room fight only of course if it was a fair fight I wouldn't be so kind of marred up like I am. But I had a accident Al and fell over a bunk and lit on the old bean and the result is Al that I have got a black eye and a bad nose and my jaw is swole a little and my ears feels kind of dull like so I guess the ladys wouldn't call me Handsome Jack if they seen me but it will be all O. K. in a few days and I will be the same old Jack.

But I will tell you how it come off. I was setting reading a letter from Florrie that all as she said in it was that she had boughten herself a new suit that everybody says was the cutest she ever had on her back just like I give a dam because by the time I see her in it she will of gave it to little Al's Swede. But any way I was reading this letter when in come Shaffer the bird that was mixed up

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in that little gag about the fake spy and he come up to me and says "Well you big snake who's male are you reading now?" Well Al him calling me big is like I would say hello Jumbo to a flee. But any way I says "My own male and who and the he—ll male would I be reading?" So he said "Well its hard to tell because you stole some of mine and read it and not only that but you showed it to the whole A. E. F. so now stand up and take what's comeing to you."

Wel Al I thought he was just kidding so I says "I come over here to fight Germans and not 1 of my own pals." So he says "Don't call me no pal, but if you come to fight Germans now is your chance because you say I'm 1 of them."

Well he kind of made a funny motion like he wanted to spar or wrestle or something and I thought he meant it in a friendly way like we sometimes pull off a rough house once in a wile so I stood up but before I had a chance to take holds with him he cut loose at me with his fists doubled up and I kind of triped or something and fell over a bench and I must have hit something sharp on the way down and I kind of got scratched up but they are only scratchs and don't amt. to nothing. Only I wished I knew he had of been serious and I would of made a punching bag out of him and you can bet that the next time he wants to start something I won't wait to see if he is jokeing but

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I will tear into him and he will think he run into a Minnie Weffers.

Well I suppose Alcock was sore at me for getting the best of him and not falling for his gag and he was afraid to tackle me himself and he told big Shaffer a peck of lies about some dam letter or something and said I stole it and it made Shaffer sore and no wonder because who wouldn't be sore if they thought somebody was reading their male. But a man like Shaffer that if he stopped a shell the Dutchmens would half to move back a ways so as they would be room enough in France to bury him hasn't got no right to pick on a smaller man especially when I wasn't feeling good on acct. of something I eat but at that Al size don't make no difference and its the bird that's got the nerve and knows how that can knock them dead and if Shaffer had of gave me any warning he would of been the 1 that is scratched up instead of I though I guess he is to lucky to trip over a kit bag and fall down and cut himself.

But my scratchs don't really amt. to nothing Al and in a few days I will be like new.

Your pal, JACK.

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Somewheres in France, April 25.

FRIEND AL: Well old pal I have got some big news for you now. We been ordered up to the front and its good by to this Class D burg and now for some real actions and I am tickled to death and I only hope the Dutchmens will loose their minds and try and start something up on the section where we are going to and I can't tell you where its at Al but you keep watching the papers and even if the boshs don't start nothing maybe we will start something on our own acct. and the next thing you know you will read where we have got them on the Lincoln highway towards Russia and believe me Al we won't half to stop every little wile to bring up no Van Hindenburg but we will run them ragged and they say the Germans is the best singers and when they all bust out with Comrades they will make the Great Lakes band sound like the Russia artillery.

Well Al I am so excited I can't write much and I have got a 100 things to tend to so I will half to cut this letter short.

Well some of the other birds like Alcock and them is pertending like they was tickled to death to but believe me Al if the orders was changed all of a sudden and they told us we was going to stay here till the duration of the war we wouldn't half to call on the Engrs. to dam their tear ducks. But

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they pertend like they are pleased and keep whistleing so as they won't blubber and today they all laughed their heads off at something that come out in the Co. paper that some of the boys gets out but they laughed like they was nervous instead of enjoying it.

Well what come out in the paper was supposed to be a joke on me and if they think its funny they are welcome and I would send the paper to you that its in only I haven't got only the 1 copy so I will copy it down and you can see for yourself what a screen it is. Well they's 1 peace that's got up to look like it was the casuality list in some regular newspaper and it says:

WOUNDED IN ACTION
Privates
Jack Keefe, Chicago, Ill. (Very)

And then they's another peace that reads like this:

DECORATED

"The Company has won its first war honors and Private Jack Keefe is the lucky dog. Private Keefe has been decorated by Gen. George Shaffer of the 4th. Dachshunds for extreme courage and cleverness in showing up a dangerous nest of spies. Keefe was hit four times by large caliber shells

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before he could say surrender. He was decorated with the Order of the Schwarz Auge, the Order of the Rot Nase and the Order of the Blumenkohl Ohren, besides which a Right Cross was hung on his jaw. Private Keefe takes his honors very modestly, no one having even heard him mention them except in stifled tones during the night."

Well Al all right if they can find something to amuse themself and they need it I guess. But they better remember that they's plenty of time for the laugh to be on the other foot before this war is over.

Your pal,

JACK.

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CHAPTER V

SAMMY BOY

In the Trenchs, May 6.

FRIEND AL: Well Al I haven't wrote you no letter for a long wile and I suppose maybe you think something might of happened to me or something. Well old pal they hasn't nothing happened and I only wished they would because anything would be better than laying around here and I would rather stop a shell and get spread all over Europe then lay around here and die a day at a time you might say.

Well I would of wrote you before only we was on the march and by the time night come around my dogs fret me so bad I couldn't think of nothing else and when they told us we was comeing up here I thought of course they would send us up in motor Lauras or something and not wear us all out before we got here but no it was drill every ft. of the way and I said to Johnny Alcock the night we got here that when they was sending us up here to die they might at lease give us a ride and he says no because when they send a man to the elec-

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tric chair they don't push him up there in a go cart but they make him get there on his own dogs. So I said "Yes but he travels light and he don't half to go far and when he gets there they's a chair waiting for him to set down in it but they load us up like a troop ship and walk us ½ way to Sweden and when we finely get here we can either remain standing or lay down in a mud puddle and tuck ourself in."

And another thing Al I thought they meant we was going right in the front line trenchs where a man has got a chance to see some fun but where we are at is what they call the reserve trenchs and we been here 3 days all ready and have got to stay here 7 days more that is unless they should something happen to the regt. that's up ahead of us in the front line and if they get smashed up or something and half to be sent back to the factory then we will jump right in and take their place and I don't wish them no bad luck but I wished they would get messed up tonight at lease enough so as they would half to come out for repairs but it don't look like they was much chance of that as we are on a quite section where they hasn't been nothing doing since the war begin you might say but of course Jerry is raising he—ll all over the front now and here is where he will probably pick on next and believe me Al we will give him a welcome.

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But the way things is mapped out now we will be here another wk. yet and then up in the front row for 10 days and then back to the rest billets for a rest but they say the only thing that gets a rest back there is your stomach but believe me your stomach gets a holiday right here without going to no rest billets.

Well I thought they would be some excitement up here but its like church but everybody says just wait till we get up in front and then we will have plenty of excitement well I hope they are telling the truth because its sure motonus here and about all as we do is have inspections and scratch. As Johnny Alcock says France may of lose a whole lot of men in this war but they don't seem to of been no casualitys amist the cuties.

Well Al they's plenty of other bugs here as well as the kinds that itchs and I mean some of the boys themselfs and here is where it comes out on them is where they haven't nothing to do only lay around and they's 1 bird that his name is Harry Friend but the boys calls him the chicken hawk and its not only on acct. of him loveing the ladys but he is all the wile writeing letters to them and he is 1 of these fancy writers that has to wind up before he comes down on the paper with a word and between every word he sores up and swoops down again like he was over a barn yard and sometimes the boys set around and bets on how many

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wirls he will take before he will get within writeing distants of the paper.

Well any way he must get a whole lot of letters wrote if he answers all the ones that comes for him because every time you bump into him he pulls one on you that he just got from some gal that's nuts about him somewheres in the U. S. and its always a different 1 and I bet the stores that sells service stars kept open evenings the wk. this bird enlisted in the draft. But today it was a French gal that he had a letter from her some dame in Chalons and he showed me her picture and she's some queen Al and he is pulling for us to be sent there on our leave after we serve our turn up here and I don't blame him for wanting to be where she's at and I wished they was some baby doll that I could pal around with in what ever burg they ship us to. But I don't know nobody Al and besides I'm a married man so no flirting with the parley vous for me and I suppose I will spend most of my time with the 2 Vin sisters and a headache.

Your pal, JACK.

In the Trenchs, May 9.

FRIEND AL: Well Al I was talking to 1 of the boys Jack Brady today and we was talking about Harry Friend and I told Jack about him getting a letter from this French girlie at Chalons

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and how he was pulling for us to go there on our leave so as he could see her so Jack said he didn't think we would go there but they would probably send us to 1 of the places where we could get a bath as god knows we will need one and they will probably send us to Aix les Bains or Nice or O. D. Cologne. So I said I didn't care where we was sent as they wouldn't be no gal waiting for me in none of them towns so Jack says it was my own fault if they wasn't as all these places was full of girlies that was there for us to dance with them and etc. and the officers had all their names and addresses and the way to do was write to 1 of them and tell her when you was comeing and would she like to show you around and he said he would see 1 of the lieuts. that he stands pretty good with him and see what he could do for me. Well Al I told him to go ahead as I thought it was just a joke but sure enough he showed up after a wile and he said the lieut. didn't only have 1 name left but she was a queen and he give me her name and address and its Miss Marie Antoinette 14 rue de Nez Rouge, O. D. Cologne.

Well Al I didn't have nothing else to do so I set down and wrote her a note and I will coppy down what I wrote:

"*Dear Miss Antoinette:* I suppose you will be supprised to hear from me and I hope you won't

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Every time you bump into him he pulls a letter on you

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think I am some fresh bird writeing you this letter for a joke or something but I am just 1 of Uncle Sam's soldiers from the U. S. A. and am now in the trenchs fighting for your country. Well Miss Antoinette we expect to be here about 2 wks. more and then we will have a leave off for a few days and some of the boys thinks we may spend it in your city and I thought maybe you might be good enough to show me around when we get there. I was a baseball pitcher back in the U. S. A. tall and athletic build and I don't suppose you know what baseball is but thought maybe you would wonder what I look like. Well if you aren't busy when we get there I will hope to see you and if you are agreeable drop me a line here and I will sure look you up when I get there."

So then I give her my name and where to reach me and of course they won't nothing come out of it Al only a man has got to amuse yourself some way in a dump like this or they would go crazy. But it would sure be a horse on me if she was to answer the letter and say she would be glad to see me and then of course I would half to write and tell her I was a married man or else not write to her at all but of course they won't nothing come out of it and its a good bet we won't never see Cologne as that was just a guess on Brady's part.

Well Al things is going along about like usual

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with nothing doing only inspections and etc. and telling us how to behave when we get up there in the front row and not to stick our head over the top in the day time and you would think we was the home guards or something and at that I guess the home guards is seeing as much of the war as we are in this old ditch but they say it will be different when we get up in front and believe me I hope so and they can't send us there to soon to suit me.

Your pal,

JACK.

In the Trenchs, May 11.

FRIEND AL: Well Al here we are up in the front line trenchs and we come in here 2 days ahead of time but that's the way they run everything in the army except feed you but they don't never do nothing when they say they are going to and I suppose they want a man to get use to haveing things come by supprise so as it won't interfere with your plans if you get killed a couple days before you was looking for it.

Well Al we are looking for it now most any day and this may be the last letter you will ever get from your old pal and you may think I am kidding when I say that but 1 of the boys told me a wile ago that he heard Capt. Seeley telling 1 of the

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lieuts. that the reason we come in here ahead of time was on acct. of them expecting the Dutchmans to make their next drive on this section and the birds that we are takeing their place was a bunch of yellow stiffs that was hard of hearing except when they was told to retreat and Gen. Pershing figured that if they was up here when Jerry made a attack they would turn around and open up a drive on Africa and the bosh has been going through the rest of the line like it was held by the ladies aid and Gen. Foch says they have got to be stopped so we are elected Al and you know what that means and it means we can't retreat under no conditions but stay here till we get killed. So you see I wasn't kidding Al and it looks like it was only a question of a few days or maybe not that long but at that I guess most of the boys would just as leave stop a Dutch bayonet as to lay around in this he—ll hole. Believe me Al this is a fine resort to spend 10 days at what with the mud and the perfume and a whole menajery useing you for a parade grounds.

Well Capt. Seeley wants us to get all the rest we can now on acct. of what's comeing off after a wile but believe me I am not going to oversleep myself in this he—ll hole because suppose Jerry would pick out the time wile you was asleep to come over and pay us a visit and they's supposed

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to be some of the boys on post duty to watch all night and keep their eye pealed and wake us up if they's something stiring but I have been in hotels a lot of times and left a call with some gal that didn't have nothing to do only pair her finger nails and when the time come ring me up but even at that she forgot it so what chance is they for 1 of these sentrys to remember and wake everybody up when maybe they's 5 or 6 Dutchmens divideing him into building lots with their bayonet or something. So as far as I am conserned I will try and keep awake wile I can because it looks like when we do go to sleep we will stay asleep several yrs. and even if we are lucky enough to get back to them rest billets we can sleep till the cows come home a specially if they give us some more of them entertainments like we had in camp.

Well Al before we got here I thought they would be so much fireing back and 4th. up here that a man couldn't hear themself think but I guess Jerry is saveing up for the big show though every little wile they try and locate our batterys and clean them out and once in so often 1 of our big guns replys but as Johnny Alcock says you couldn't never accuse our artillrys from being to gabby and I guess we are lucky they are pretty near speechless as they might take a notion to fire short but any way a little wile ago 1 of our guns sent

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a big shell over and Johnny says what and the he—ll can that be and I said its a shell from 1 of our guns and he says he thought they fired 1 yesterday.

Well as I say here we are with 10 days of it stareing us in the eye and the cuties for company and the only way we can get out of here ahead of time is on a stretcher and I wouldn't mind that Al but as I say I want to be awake when my time comes because if I am going to get killed in this war I want to have some idear who done it.

Your pal, JACK.

In the Trenchs, May 14.

FRIEND AL: Well Al I got the supprise of my life today when Jack Brady handed me a letter that had came for me and that's supprise enough itself but all the more when I opened it up and seen who it was from. Well it was from that baby in Cologne and I will coppy it down as it is short and you can see for yourself what she says. Well here it is:

"*Dear Mr. Keefe:* Your letter just reached me and you can bet I was glad to get it. I sure will be glad to see you when you come to Cologne and I will be more than glad to show you the sights.

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This is some town and we sure will have a time when you get here. I am just learning to write English so please excuse mistakes but all I want to say is don't disappoint me but write when you will come so I can be all dressed up comme un cheval. Avec l'amour und kussen.

"MARIE ANTOINETTE."

You see Al they's part of it wrote in French and that last part means with love and kisses. Well I guess that letter I wrote her must have went over strong and any ways it looks like she didn't exactly hate me eh Al? Well it looks like I would half to write to her back and tell her I am a married man and they can't be no flirting between her and I but if she wants to be a good pal and show me around O. K. and no harm done. Well I hope she takes it that way because it sure will seem good to talk to a gal again that can talk a little English and not la la la all the wile but of course its a good bet that I won't never see her because we are just as libel to go somewheres else as Cologne though Brady seems to think that's where we are headed for. Well time will tell and in the mean wile we are libel to get blowed to he—ll and gone and then of course it would be good by sweet Marie but I was supprised to hear from her as I only wrote to her in fun and didn't think nothing would come from it but I guess Harry Friend isn't the only

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lady killer in the U. S. army and if I was 1 of the kind that shows off all their letters I guess I have got 1 now to show.

A side from all that Al we was supposed to have our chow a hr. ago but no chow and some of the boys says its on acct. of our back arears being under fire and you see the kitchens is way back of the front lines and the boys on chow detail is supposed to bring our food up here but when the back arears is under fire they are scared to bring it up or they might maybe run into some bad luck on the way. How is that for fine dope Al when a whole regt. starves to death because a few yellow stiffs is afraid that maybe a shell might light near them and spill a few beans. Brady says maybe they are trying to starve us so as we will get mad and fight harder when the time comes like in the old days when they use to have fights between men and lions in Reno and Rome and for days ahead they wouldn't give the lions nothing to eat so as they would be pretty near wild when they got in Reno and would make a rush at the gladaters that was supposed to fight them and try and eat them up on acct. of being so near starved. Well Al I would half to be good and hungry before I would want to eat a Dutchman a specially after they been in the trenchs a wile.

But any way it don't make a whole lot of differents if the chow gets here or not because when

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it comes its nothing only a eye dropper full of soup and coffee and some bread that I would hate to have some of it fall on my toe and before we left the U. S. everybody was trying to preserve food so as the boys in France would have plenty to eat but if they sent any of the preserves over here the boat they come on must of stopped a torpedo and I hope the young mackerels won't make themselfs sick on sweets.

Jokeing to 1 side this is some climate Al and they don't never a day pass without it raining and I use to think the weather profits back home had a snap that all they had to do was write down rain or snow or fair and even if they was wrong they was way up there where you couldn't get at them but they have got a tough job when you look at a French weather profit and as soon as he learns the French for rain he can open up an office and he don't half to hide from nobody because he can't never go wrong though Alcock says they have got a dry season here that begins the 14 of July and ends that night but its a holiday so the weather profit don't half to monkey with it. Any way its so dark here all the wile that you can't hardly tell day and night only at night times the Dutchmens over across the way sends up a flare once in a wile to light things up so as they can see if they's any of us prowling around Nobody's Land and speaking about Nobody's Land Brady says its the

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ground that lays between the German trenchs and the vermin trenchs but jokeing to 1 side if it wasn't for these here flares we wouldn't know they was anybody over in them other trenchs and when we come in here they was a lot of talk about Jerry sending over a patrol to find out who we was but it looks like he wasn't interested. But all and all Al its nothing like I expected up here and all we have seen of the war is when a shell or 2 busts in back of us or once in a wile 1 of their areoplanes comes over and 1 of ours chases them back and sometimes they have a battle but they always manage to finish it where we can't see it for the fear we might enjoy ourselfs.

Well it looks like we would half to go to bed on a empty stomach if you could call it bed and speaking about stomach Brady says they's a old saying that a army travels on their stomach but a cutie covers a whole lot more ground. But as I say when you don't get your chow you don't miss much only it kills a little time and everybody is sick in tired of doing nothing and 1 of the boys was saying tonight he wished the Dutchmens would attack so as to break the motley and Alcock said that if they did attack he hoped they would do it with gas as his nose needed a change of air.

Your pal, JACK.

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In the Trenchs, May 16.

FRIEND AL: Well old pal I come within a ace you might say of not being here to write you this letter and you may think that's bunk but wait till you hear what come off. Well it seems our scout planes brought back word yesterday that the Dutch regt. over across the way had moved out and another regt. had took their place and it seems when they make a change like that our gens. always trys to find out who the new rivals is so the orders come yesterday that we was to get up a patrol party for last night and go over and take a few prisoners so as we would know what regt. we was up vs. Well as soon as the news come out they was some of the boys volunteered to go in the patrol and they was only a few going so I didn't feel like noseing myself in and maybe crowding somebody out that was set on going and besides what and the he—ll do I care what regt. is there as long as its Germans and its like you lived in a flat and the people across the hall moved out and some people moved in why as long as you knowed they wasn't friends of yours you wouldn't rush over and ring their door bell and say who the he—ll are you but you would wait till they had time to get some cards printed and stick 1 in the mail box. So its like I told Alcock that when the boys come back they would tell the Col. that the people opp.

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us was Germans and the Col. would be supprised because he probably thought all the wile that they was the Idaho boy scouts or something. But at that I pretty near made up my mind at the last minute to volunteer just to break the motley you might say but it was to late and I lost out.

Well Al the boys that went didn't come back and I hope the Col. is satisfied now because he has lost that many men and he knows just as much as he did before namely that they's some Germans across the way and either they killed our whole bunch or took them a prisoner and instead of us learning who they are they found out who we are because the boys that's gone is all from our regt. and its just like as if we went over and give them the information they wanted to save them the trouble of comeing over here and getting it.

Well it don't make a man feel any happier to think about them poor boys and god only knows what happened to them if they are prisoners or dead and some of them was pals of mine to but the worst part of it is that the word will be sent home that they are missing in actions and their wifes won't know what become of them if they got any and I can't help from thinking I might of been with them only for not wanting to crowd somebody out and if I had of went my name would be in the casuality list as missing in actions but I guess at that if Florrie picked up the paper and seen it

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she wouldn't know it was her husband its so long since she wrote it on a envelop.

Well Al they's other gals in the world besides Florrie and of course its to late to get serious with them when a man has got a wife and kid but believe me I am going to enjoy myself if they happen to pick out Cologne to send us to and if the little gal down there is 1 of the kind that can be good pals with a man without looseing her head over me I will sure have a good time but I suppose when she sees me she will want to begin flirting or something and then I will half to pass her up before anybody gets hurt. Well any way I wrote her a friendly letter today and just told her to keep me in mind and I stuck a few French words in it for a gag but I will coppy down what I wrote the best I can remember it so you will know what I wrote. Here it is:

Mon cher Marie: Your note recd. and you can bet I was mighty glad to hear from you and learn you would show me around Cologne. That is if they send us there and if we get out of here alive. Well you said you was just learning English well I will maybe be able to help you along and you can maybe help me with the French so you see it will be 50 50. Well I sure hope they send us to Cologne and I will let you know the minute I find out where they are going to send us and maybe

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even if its somewheres else couldn't you visit there at the same time and maybe I could see you. Well girlie we will be out of here in less then a wk. now if we don't have no bad luck and you can bet I won't waist no time getting to where ever they send us and I hope its Cologne. So in the mean wile don't take no wood nickles and don't get impatient but be a good girlie and save up your loving for me. Tres beaucoup from

Your Sammy Boy,

JACK KEEFE.

That's what I wrote her Al and I bet she can't hardly wait to hear if I'm comeing or not but I don't suppose they's any chance of them sending us there and a specially if they find out that anybody wants to go there but maybe she can fix it to meet me somewheres else and any ways they won't be no lifes lost if I never see her and maybe it would be better that way. But a man has got to write letters or do something to keep your mind off what happened to them poor birds that went in the patrol and a specially when I come so near being 1 of them.

Your pal,

JACK.

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In the Trenchs, May 18.

FRIEND AL: Well Al if I am still alive yet its not because I laid back and didn't take no chances and I wished some of the baseball boys that use to call me yellow when I was in there pitching had of seen me last night and I guess they would of sang a different song only in the 1st. place I was where they couldn't nobody see me and secondly they would of been so scared they would of choked to death if they tried to talk let alone sing. But wait till you hear about it.

Well yesterday P. M. Sargent Crane asked me how I liked life in the trenchs and I said O. K. only I got tired on acct. of they not being no excitement or nothing to do and he says oh they's plenty to do and I could go out and help the boys fix up the bob wire in front of the trenchs like we done back in the training camp. So I said I didn't see how they could be any fixing needed as they hadn't nothing happened on this section since the war started you might say and the birds that was here before us had plenty of time to fix it if it needed fixing. So he says "Well any ways they's no excitement to fixing the wire but if you was looking for excitement why didn't you go with that patrol the other night?" So I said "Because I didn't see no sence to trying to find out who was in the other trenchs when we know they are Ger-

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mans and that's all we need to know. Wait till they's a real job and you won't see me hideing behind nobody." So he says "I've got a real job for you tonight and you can go along with Ted Phillips to the listening post."

Well Al a listening post is what they call a little place they got dug out way over near the German trenchs and its so close you can hear them talk sometimes and you are supposed to hear if they are getting ready to pull something and report back here so as they won't catch us asleep. Well I was wild to go just for something to do but I been haveing trouble with my ears lately probably on acct. of the noise from so much shell fire or something but any ways I have thought a couple times that I was getting a little deef so I thought I better tell him the truth so I said "I would be tickled to death to go only I don't know if I ought to or not because I don't hear very good even in English and of course Jerry would be telling their plans in German and suppose I didn't catch on to it and I would feel like a murder if they started a big drive and I hadn't gave my pals no warning." So he says "Don't worry about that as Phillips has got good ears and understands German and he has been there before only in a job like that a man wants company and you are going along for company."

Well before we snuck out there Sargent Crane

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called us to 1 side and says "You boys is takeing a big chance and Phillips knows what to do but you want to remember Keefe to keep quite and not make no noise or talk to each other because if Jerry finds out you are there we probably won't see you again."

Well Al it finely come time for us to go and we went and if anybody asks you how to spend a pleasant evening don't steer them up against a listening post with a crazy man. Well I suppose you think its pretty quite there at home nights and I use to think so to but believe me Al, Bedford at 2 o'clock in the A. M. is a bowling alley along the side of 1 of these here listening posts. It may sound funny but I would of gave a month's pay if somebody would of shot off a fire cracker or anything to make a noise. There was the bosh trench about 20 yds. from us but not a sound out of them and a man couldn't help from thinking what if they had of heard us out there and they was getting ready to snoop up on us and that's why they was keeping so still and it got so as I could feel 1 of their bayonets burrowing into me and I am no quitter Al when it comes to fighting somebody you can see but when you have got a idear that somebody is cralling up on you and you haven't no chance to fight back I would like to see the bird that could enjoy themself and besides suppose my ears had went back on me worse then I thought and the

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Dutchmens was realy makeing a he—ll of a racket but I couldn't hear them and maybe they was getting ready to come over the top and I wouldn't know the differents and all of a sudden they would lay a garage and dash out behind it and if they didn't kill us we would be up in front of the court's marshal for not warning our pals.

Well as I say I would of gave anything for some one to of fired off a gun or made some noise of some kind but when this here Phillips finely opened up his clam and spoke I would of jumped a mile if they had of been any room to jump anywheres. Well the sargent had told us not to say nothing but all of a sudden right out loud this bird says this is a he—ll of a war. Well I motioned back at him to shut up but of course he couldn't see me and he thought I hadn't heard what he said so he said it over again so then I thought maybe he hadn't heard the sargent's orders so I whispered to him that he wasn't supposed to talk. Well Al they wasn't no way of keeping him quite and he says "That's all bunk because I been out here before and talked my head off and nothing happened." So I says well if you have got to talk you don't half to yell it. So then he tried to whisper Al but his whisper sounded like a jazz record with a crack in it so he says I'm not yelling I am whispering so I said yes I have heard Hughey Jennings whisper like that out on the lines.

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So he shut up for a wile but pretty soon he busted out again and this time he was louder then ever and he asked me could I sing and I said no I couldn't so then he says well you can holler can't you so I said I suppose I could so he says "Well I know how we could play a big joke on them square heads. Lets the both of us begin yelling like a Indian and they will hear us and they will think they's a whole crowd of us here and they will begin bombing us or something and think they are going to kill a whole crowd of Americans but it will only be us 2 and we can give them the laugh for waisting their ammunitions."

Well Al I seen then that I was parked there with a crazy man and for a wile I didn't say nothing because I was scared that I might say something that would encourage him some way so I just shut up and finely he says what is the matter ain't you going to join me? So I said I will join you in the jaw in a minute if you don't shut your mouth and then he quited down a little, but every few minutes he would have another swell idear and once he asked me could I imitate animals and I said no so he says he could mew like a cow and he had heard the boshs was so hard up for food and they would rush out here thinking they was going to find a cow but it wouldn't be no cow but it would be a horse on them.

Well you can imagine what I went through out

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there with a bird like that and I thought more then once I would catch it from him and go nuts myself but I managed to keep a hold of myself and the happiest minute of my life was when it was time for us to crall back in our dug outs but at that I can't remember how we got back here.

This A. M. Sargent Crane asked me what kind of a time did we have and I told him and I told him this here Phillips was squirrel meat and he says Phillips is just as sane as anybody usualy only everybody that went out on the listening post was effected that way by the quite and its a wonder I didn't go nuts to.

Well its a wonder I didn't Al and its a good thing I kept my head and kept him from playing 1 of those tricks as god knows what would of happened and the entire regt. might of been wipped out. But I hope they don't wish no more listening post on me but if they do you can bet I will pick my own pardner and it won't be no nut and no matter what Sargent Crane says if this here Phillips is sane we're stopping at Palm Beach.

Your pal, JACK.

In the Trenchs, May 19.

FRIEND AL: Well old pal don't say nothing about this not even to Bertha what I am going to tell you about as some people might not

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understand and a specially a woman and might maybe think I wasn't acting right towards Florrie or something though when a man is married to a woman that he has been in France pretty near 4 mos. and she has wrote him 3 letters I don't see where she would have a sqawk comeing at whatever I done but of course I am not going to do nothing that I wouldn't just as leave tell her about it only I want to tell her myself and when I get a good ready.

Well I guess I told you we was only supposed to stay here in the front line 10 days and then they will somebody come and releive us and take our place and then we go to the rest billets somewheres and lay around till its our turn to come up here again. Well Al we been in the front line now eight days and that means we won't only be here 2 days more so probably we will get out of here the day after tomorrow night. Well up to today we didn't have no idear where we was going to get sent as they's several places where the boys can go on leave like Aix le Bains and Nice and etc. and we didn't know which 1 it would be. So today we was talking about it and I said I wished I knew for sure and Jack Brady stands pretty good with 1 of the lieuts. so he says he would ask him right out. So he went and asked him and the lieut. told him Cologne.

Well Al I hadn't no sooner found out when 1

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of the boys hands me a letter that just come and it was a letter from this baby doll that I told you about that's in Cologne and I will coppy down the letter so you can see for yourself what she says and here it is Al:

Dear Sammy Boy:

I was tres beaucoup to get your letter and will sure be glad to see you and can hardly wait till you get here. Don't let them send you anywhere else as Cologne is the prettiest town in France and the liveliest and we will sure have some time going to shows etc. and I hope you bring along beaucoup francs. Well I haven't time to write you much of a letter as I have got to spend the afternoon at the dressmaker's. You see I am getting all dolled up for my Sammy Boy. But be sure and let me know when you are going to get here and when you reach Cologne jump right in a Noir et Blanc taxi and come up to the house. You know the number so come along Sammy and make it toot sweet.

Yours with tres beaucoup,

MARIE.

So that's her letter Al and it looks like I was going to be in right in old O. D. Cologne and it sure does look like fate was takeing a hand in the game when things breaks this way and when I wrote to this gal the first time I didn't have no

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idear of ever seeing her but the way things is turning out it almost seems like we was meant to meet each other. Well Al I only hope she has got some sence and won't get to likeing me to well or of course all bets is off but if we can just be good pals and go around to shows etc. together I don't see where I will be doing anything out of the way. Only as I say don't say nothing about it to Bertha or nobody else as people is libel to not understand and I guess most of them women back in the U. S. thinks that when a man has been up at the front as long as we have and then when he gets a few days leave he ought to take a running hop step and jump to the nearest phonograph and put on a Rodeheaver record.

Your pal,

JACK.

In the Trenchs, May 20.

FRIEND AL: Well Al just a line and it will probably be the last time I will write you from the trenchs for a wile as our time is up tomorrow night and the next time I write you it will probably be from Cologne and I will tell you what kind of a time they show us there and all about it. I just got through writeing a note to the little gal there telling her I would get there as soon as possible but I couldn't tell her when that would be as I don't know how far it is or how we get there but Brady

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said he thought it was about 180 miles so I suppose they will make us walk.

Well talk about a quite section and they hasn't even been a gun went off all day or no areoplanes or nothing and here we thought we was going to see a whole lot of excitement and we haven't fired a shot or throwed a grenade or even saw a German all the wile we was here and we are just like when we come only for those poor birds that went on that wild goose chase and didn't come back and they's been some talk about sending another patrol over to get revenge for those poor boys but I guess they won't nothing come of it. It would be like sending good money after bad is the way I look at it.

Several of the boys has been calling me Sammy Boy today and I signed my name that way in 1 of the notes I wrote that little gal and I suppose who ever censored it told some of the boys about it and now they are trying to kid me. Well Al I don't see where a censor has got any license to spill stuff like that but they's no harm done and they can laugh at me all they want to wile we are here as I will be the 1 that does the laughing when we get to Cologne. And I guess a whole lot of them will wish they was this same Sammy Boy when they see me paradeing up and down the blvd. with the bell of the ball. O you sweet Marie.

Your pal, JACK.

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In the Trenchs, May 22.

FRIEND AL: Well Al its all off and we are here yet and what is more we are libel to be here till the duration of the war if we don't get killed and believe me I would welcome death rather then stay in this he—ll hole another 10 days and from now on I am going to take all the chances they is to take and the sooner they finish me I will be glad of it and it looks like it might come tonight Al as I have volunteered to go along with the patrol that's going over and try and get even for what they done to our pals.

Well old pal it was understood when we come up here that we would be here 10 days and yesterday was the 10th. day we was here. Well I happened to say something yesterday to Sargent Crane about what time was we going and he says where to and I said I thought our time was up and we was going to get releived. So he says "Who is going to releive us and what and the he—ll do you want to be releived of?" So I said I understood they didn't only keep a regt. in the front line 10 days and then took them out and sent them to a rest billet somewheres. So he says what do you call this but a rest billet? So then I asked him how long we had to stay here and he said "Well it may be a day or it may be all summer. But if

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we get ordered out in a hurry it won't be to go to no rest billet but it will be to go up to where they are fighting the war."

So I made the remark that I wished somebody had of tipped me off as I had fixed up a kind of a date thinking we would be through here in 10 days. So he asked me where my date was at and I said Cologne. So then he kind of smiled and said "O and when was you planing to start?" So I said "I was figureing on starting tonight." So he waited a minute and then he said "Well I don't know if I can fix it for you tonight or tomorrow night, but they's some of the boys going to start in that direction one of them times and I guess you can go along."

Well Al I suppose Alcock and Brady and them has been playing another 1 of their gags on me and I hope they enjoyed it and as far as I am conserned they's no harm done. Cologne Al is way back of the German lines and when Sargent Crane said they was some of the boys starting in that direction he meant this here patrol. So I'm in on it Al and they didn't go last night but tonight's the big night. And some of the boys is calling me Sammy Boy and trying to make a monkey out of me but the smart Alex that's doing it isn't none of them going along on this raid and that's just what a man would expect from them. Because

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they's a few of us Al that come across the old puddle to fight and the rest of them thinks they are at the Young Peoples picnic. Your pal,

JACK.

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CHAPTER VI

SIMPLE SIMON

In the Trenchs, May 29.

FRIEND AL: Well Al we have been haveing a lot of fun with a bird name Jack Simon only the boys calls him Simple Simon and if you seen him you wouldn't ask why because you would know why as soon as you seen him without asking why as he keeps his mouth open all the wile so as he will be ready to swallow whatever you tell him as you can tell him anything and he eats it up. So the boys has been stuffing him full of storys of all kinds and he eats them all up and you could tell him the reason they had the bob wire out in front was to scratch yourself on it when the cuties was useing you for a race track and he would eat it up.

Well when we come in here and took over this section this bird was sick and I don't know what ailed him only it couldn't of been brain fever but any way he didn't join us in here till the day before yesterday but ever since he joined us the boys has been stuffing him full and enjoying themself at his expenses. Well the 1st. thing he asked me

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was if we had saw any actions since we been here and I told him about a raid we was on the other night before he come and we layed down a garage and then snuck over to the German trenchs and jumped into them trying to get a hold of some prisoners but we couldn't find head or tale of no Germans where our bunch jumped in as they had ducked and hid somewheres when they found out we was comeing. So he says he wished he could of been along as he might of picked up some souvenirs over in their trenchs.

That's 1 of his bugs Al is getting souvenirs as he is 1 of these here souvenir hounds that it don't make no differents to him who wins the war as long as he can get a ship load of junk to carry it back home and show it off. So I told Johnny Alcock and some of the other boys about Simon wishing he could of got some souvenirs so they framed up on him and begin selling him junk that they told him they had picked it up over in the German trenchs and Alcock blowed some cigarette smoke in a bottle and corked it up and told him it was German tear gas and Simon give him 8 franks for it and Jack Brady showed him a couple of laths tied together with a peace of wire and told him it was a part of the areoplane that belonged to Guy Meyer the French ace that brought down so many Dutchmans before they finely got him and Brady said he hated to part with it as he had took

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it off a German prisoner that he brought in but if Simon thought it was worth 20 franks he could have it. So Simon bought it of him and wanted to know all about how Brady come to get the prisoner and of course Brady had to make it up as we haven't saw a German let alone take them a prisoner since we was back in the training arears and wouldn't know they was any only for their artillery and throwing up rockets at night and snipping at a man every time you go out on a wire party or something.

But any way Simon eats it up whatever you pull on him and some times I feel sorry for him and feel like tipping him off but the boys fun would be spoiled and believe me they need some kind of sport up here or pretty soon we would all be worse off then Simon and we would be running around fomenting at the mouth.

Well Al I wished you would write once in a wile if its only a line as a man likes to get mail once in a wile and I haven't heard from Florrie for pretty near a month and then all as she said was that the reason she hadn't wrote was because she wasn't feeling the best and I suppose she got something in her eye but anything for an excuse to not write and you would think I had stepped outdoors to wash the windows instead of being away from her since last December.

Your pal,

JACK.

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In the Trenchs, June 4.

FRIEND AL: Well Al nothing doing as usual only patching things up once in a wile and it would be as safe here as picking your teeth if our artillery had a few brains as the Germans wouldn't never pay no tension to us if our batterys would lay off them but we don't no sooner get a quite spell when our guns cuts loose and remind Fritz that they's a war and then of course the Dutchmens has got to pay for their board some way and they raise he—ll for a wile and make everybody cross but as far as I can see they don't nobody never get killed on 1 side or the other side but of course the shells mess things up and keeps the boys busy makeing repairs where if our artillery would keep their mouth shut why so would theirs and the boys wouldn't never half to leave their dice game only for chow.

But from all as we hear I guess they's no dice game going on up on some of the other sections but they's another kind of a game going on up there and so far the Dutchmens has got all the best of it but some of the boys says wait till the Allys gets ready to strike back and they will make them look like a sucker and the best way to do is wait till the other side has wore themself out before you go back at them. Well I told them I have had a lot of experience in big league baseball

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where they's stragety the same like in war but I never heard none of the big league managers tell their boys to not try and score till the other side had all the runs they was going to get and further and more it looked to me like when the Germans did get wore out they could rest up again in the best hotel in Paris. So Johnny Alcock says oh they won't never get inside of Paris because the military police will stop them at the city limits and ask them for their pass and then where would they be? So I says tell that to Simple Simon and he shut up.

Speaking about Simple Simon what do you think they have got him believeing now. Well they told him Capt. Seeley had sent a patrol over the other night to find out what ailed the Germans that they never showed themself or started nothing against us and the patrol found out that Van Hindenburg had took all the men out of the section opp. us and sent them up to the war and left the trenchs opp. us empty so Simon asked him why we didn't go over there and take them then and they told him because our trenchs was warmer on acct. of being farther south. I suppose they will be telling him the next thing that Capt. Seeley and Ludendorf married sisters and the 2 of them has agreed to lay off each other.

Well Al I am glad they have got somebody else to pick on besides me and of course they can have

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a lot more fun with Simon as they's nothing to raw that he won't eat it up wile in my case I was to smart for them and just pretended like I fell for their gags as they would of been disappointed if I hadn't of and as I say somebody has got to furnish amusement in a he—ll hole like this or we would all be squirrel meat. Your pal,

JACK.

In the Trenchs, June 7.

FRIEND AL: Well Al here is a hot 1 that they pulled on this Simon bird today and it was all as I could do to help from busting out laughing while they was telling it to him.

Well it seems like he must of been thinking that over what they told him about they not being no Germans in the trenchs over opp. to where we are at and it finely downed on him that if they wasn't nobody over there why who was throwing up them flares and rockets every night. So today he said to Brady he says "Didn't you birds tell me them trenchs over across the way was empty?" So Brady says yes what of it. So Simon says "Well I notice they's somebody over there at night times or else who throws up them flares as they don't throw themselfs up." So Brady says they had probably left a flare thrower over there to do that for them. But Simon says they must of left a lot of flare

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throwers because the flares come from different places along the line.

So then Alcock cut in and says "Yes but you will notice they don't come from different places at once and the bird that throws them gos from 1 place to another so as we will think the trenchs is full of Germans." So Simon says "They couldn't nobody go from 1 place to another place as fast as them flares shoots up from different places." So Alcock says "No they couldn't nobody do it if they walked but the man that throws them flares don't walk because he hasn't got only 1 leg as his other leg was shot off early in the war. But Van Hindenburg is so hard up for men that even if you get a leg shot off as soon as the Dr. mops up the mess and sticks on the court plaster they send the bird back in the war and put him on a job where you don't half to walk. So they stuck this old guy in the motorcycle dept. and now all as he does is ride up and down some quite section like this here all night and stop every so often and throw up a flare to make us think the place is dirty with Germans."

Well Al Simon thought it over a wile and then asked Alcock how a man could ride a motorcycle with only 1 leg and Alcock says "Why not because you don't half to peddle a motorcycle as they run themself." So Simon says yes but how about it when you want to get off? So Alcock says "What

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has a man's legs got to do with him getting off of a motorcycle as long as you have got your head to light on?"

That is what they handed him Al and they hadn't hardly no sooner then got through with that dose when Brady begun on the souvenirs. First he asked him if he had got a hold of any new ones lately and Simon says no he hadn't seen nobody that had any for sale and besides his jack was low so Brady asked him how much did he have and he says about 4 franks. So Brady says "Well you can't expect anybody to come across with anything first class for no such chicken's food as that." So Simon says well even if he had a pocket full of jack he couldn't buy nothing with it when they wasn't nothing to buy. Then Brady asked him if he had saw the German speegle Ted Phillips had picked up and Simon says no so Brady went and got Phillips and after a wile he come back with him and Phillips said he had the speegle in his pocket and he would show it to us if we promised to be carefull and not jar it out of his hands wile he was showing it as he wouldn't have it broke for the world. So Simon stood there with his eyes popping out and Phillips pulled the speegle out of his pocket and it wasn't nothing only a dirty little looking glass that you could pretty near crall through the cracks in it and all the boys remarked what a odd little speegle it was and they

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hadn't never saw 1 like it before and etc. and finely Simon couldn't keep his clam shut no longer so he asked Phillips how much he would take for it. Well Phillips says it wasn't for sale as speegles was scarce in Germany on acct. of the war and that was why the Dutchmens always looked like a bum when you took them a prisoner. So Simon asked him what price he would set on it suppose he would sell it and Phillips says about 8 franks. Well Simon got out all his jack and they wasn't only 4 franks and he showed it to Phillips and said if he would take 10 franks for the speegle he would give him 4 franks down and the other 6 franks when he got hold of some jack so Phillips hummed and hawed a wile and finely said all right Simon could have it but he wouldn't never sell it to him only that it kept worring him so much to carry it in his pocket for the fear he would loose it or break it.

Well Al Phillips has got Simon's last 4 franks and Simon has got Phillips's speegle and I suppose now that the boys sees how soft it is they will be selling him stuff on credit and he will owe them his next months pay before they get through with him and I suppose the next thing you know they will keep their beard when they shave and sell it to him for German tobacco. Well I would half to be pretty hard up before I went in on some skin game like that and I would just as leave go up

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to 1 of them cripples that use to spraddle all over the walk along 35 st. after the ball game and stick my heel in their eye and romp off with their days receipts. Your pal, JACK.

In the Trenchs, June 11.

FRIEND AL: Well Al it seems like Capt. Seeley is up on his ear because they haven't took our regt. out of here yet because it seems Gen. Pershing told Gen. Foch that he was to help himself to any part of the U. S. army and throw them in where ever they was needed and they's been a bunch of the boys throwed in along the other parts of the front to try and stop the Germans and Capt. Seeley is raveing because they keep us here and don't take us where we can get some actions. Any way 1 of the lieuts. told some of the boys that if we didn't get took out of here pretty quick Capt. Seeley would start a war of our own on this section and all the officers was sore because we hadn't done nothing or took no prisoners or nothing you might say only make repairs in the wire and etc. Well Al how in the he—ll can we show them anything when they don't never send us over the top or nowheres else but just leave us here moldering you might say but at that I guess we have showed as much life as the birds that's over there opp. us

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in them other trenchs that hasn't hardly peeped since we come in here and the boys says they are a Saxon regt. that comes from part of Germany where the Kaiser is thought of the same as a gum boil so the Saxons feels kind of friendly towards us and they will leave us alone as long as we leave them alone and visa and versa. So I don't see where Capt. Seeley and them other officers has got a right to pan us for not showing nothing but I don't blame them for wishing they would take us out of here and show us the war and from all as we hear they's plenty of places where we could do some good or at lease as much good as the birds that has been there.

Well Al they have been stringing poor Simon along and today they give him a song and dance about some bird name Joe in the regt. that was here ahead of us that got a collection of souvenirs that makes Simon's look rotten and they said the guy's pals called him Souvenir Joe on acct. of him haveing such a fine collection. So Brady says to Simon "All you have got is 5 or 6 articles and the next thing you know they will be takeing us out of here and you might maybe never get another chance to pick up any more rare articles so if I was you I would either get busy and get a real collection or throw away them things you have got and forget it."

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So Simon says "How can I get any more souvenirs when I haven't no more jack to buy them and besides you birds haven't no more to sell." So Brady says "Souvenir Joe didn't buy his collection but he went out and got them." So Simon asked him where at and Brady told him this here Joe use to crall out in Nobody's Land every night and pick up something and Simon says it was a wonder he didn't get killed. So Brady says "How would he get killed as the trenchs over across the way was just as empty when he was here as they are now and Old 1 Legged Mike and his motorcycle was on the job then to, so Joe would wait till Mike had throwed a few flares on this section and then he would sneak out and get his souvenirs before Mike come back again on his rounds."

Well then Simon asked him where the souvenirs was out there and Brady says they was in the different shell holes because most of Joe's souvenirs was the insides of German shells that had exploded and they was the best kind of souvenirs as they wasn't no chance of them being a fake.

Well Al I had a notion to take Simon to 1 side and tell him to not pay no tension to these smart alex because the poor crum might go snooping out there some night after the insides of a shell and get the outsides and all and if something like that happened to him I would feel like a murder though I haven't never took no part in makeing a monkey

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out of him, but I thought well if the poor cheese don't know no more then that he is better off dead so let him go. Your pal,

JACK.

In the Trenchs, June 13.

FRIEND AL: Just a line Al as I am to excited to write much but I knew you would want to know the big news. Well Al I have got a daughter born the 18 of May. How is that for a supprise Al but I guess you won't be no more supprised than I was when the news come as Florrie hadn't gave me no hint and a man can't guess a thing like that when you are in France and the lady in question is back in old Chi. But it sure is wonderfull news Al and I only wished I was somewheres where I could celebrate it right but you can't even whistle here or somebody would crown you with a shovle.

Well Al the news come today in a letter from Florrie's sister Marie Allen and she has been down in Texas but I suppose Florrie got her to come up and stay with her though as far as I can see its bad enough to have a baby without haveing that bird in the house to, but they's 1 consolation we haven't got rm. in the apt. for more than 2 kids and 3 grown ups so when I get home if sweet Marie is still there yet we will either half to get

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rid of the Swede cook or she, and when it comes to a choice between a ski jumper that will work and a sister that won't why Florrie won't be bothered with no family ties.

Any way I haven't no time to worry about no Allen family now as I am feeling to good and all as I wish is that somebody wins this war dam toot sweet so as I can get home and see this little chick Al and I bet she is as pretty as a picture and she couldn't be nothing else you might say and I have wrote to Florrie to not name her or nothing till I have my say as you turn a woman loose on nameing somebody all alone and they go nuts and look through a seed catalog.

Well old pal I know you would congratulate me if you was here and I am only sorry I can't return the complement and if I was you and Bertha I would adopt 1 of these here Belgium orphans that's lost their parents as they's nothing like it Al haveing a kid or 2 in the house and I bet little Al is tickled to death with his little sister.

Well Al I have told all the boys about it and they have been haveing a lot of fun with me but any way they call me Papa now which is a he—ll of a lot better then Sammy Boy. Your pal,

JACK.

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In the Trenchs, June 14.

FRIEND AL: I am all most to nervous to write Al but anything is better then setting around thinking and besides I want you to know what has came off so as you will know what come off in the case something happens.

Well Al Simple Simon's gone. We don't know if he's dead or alive or what the he—ll and all as we know is that he was here last night and he ain't here today and they hasn't nobody seen or heard of him.

Of course Al that isn't all we know neither as we can just about guess what happened. But I have gave my word to not spill nothing about what the boys pulled on him or god knows what Capt. Seeley would do to them.

Well Al I got up this A. M. feeling fine as I had slept better then any time for a wk. and I dreamt about the little gal back home that ain't never seen her daddy or don't know if she's got 1 or not but in my dream she knowed me O. K. as I dreamt I had just got home and Florrie wasn't there to meet me as usual but I rung the bell and the ski jumper let me in and I asked her where Florrie was and she said she had went out somewheres with little Al so I was going out and look for them but the Swede says the baby is here if

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you want to see her and I asked her what baby and she says why your new little baby girl.

So then I heard a baby crying somewheres in the house and I went in the bed rm. and this little mite jumped right up out of bed and all of a sudden she was 3 yrs. old instead of a mo. and she come running to me and hollered daddy. So then I grabbed her up and we begin danceing around but all of a sudden it was I and Florrie that was danceing together and little Al and the little gal was danceing around us and then I woke up Al and found I was still in this he—ll hole but the dream was so happy that I was still feeling good over it yet and besides it looked like the sun had forgot it was in France and was going to shine for a while.

Well pretty soon along come Corp. Evans and called me to 1 side and asked me what I knew about Simon. So I says what about him. So Corp. Evans says he is missing and they hasn't nobody saw him since last night. So I says I didn't know nothing about him but if anything had happened to him they was a lot of birds in this Co. that ought to pay for it. So Corp. Evans asked me what was I driveing at and I started in to tell him about Alcock and Brady and them kidding this poor bird to death and Corp. Evans says yes he knew all about that and the best thing to do was to shut up about it as it would get everybody in bad. He

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says "Wait a couple days any way and maybe he will show up O. K. and then they won't be no sence in spilling all this stuff." So I says all right I would wait a couple days but these birds ought to get theirs if something serious has happened and if he don't show up by that time I won't make no promise to spill all I know. So Corp. Evans says I didn't half to make no promise as he would spill the beans himself if Simon isn't O. K.

Well Al of course all the boys had heard the news by the time I got to talk to them and they's 2 or 3 of them that feels pretty sick over it and no wonder and the bird that feels the sickest is Alcock and here is why. Well it seems like yesterday while I was telling all the boys about the news from home Simon was giveing Alcock a ear full of that junk Brady had been slipping him about Souvenir Joe and Simon asked Alcock if he thought they was still any of them souvenirs worth going after out in them shell holes. So Alcock says of course they must be as some of the holes was made new since we been here. But Alcock told him that if he was him he wouldn't waist no time collecting the insides of German shells as the Germans was so hard up for mettle and etc. now days that the shells they was sending over was about ½ full of cheese and stuff that wouldn't keep. So Alcock says to him "What you ought to go after is a Saxon because you can bet that Souvenir Joe didn't get none and

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if you would get 1 all the boys would begin calling you Souvenir Simon instead of Simple Simon and you would make Souvenir Joe look like a dud."

Well Al Simon didn't know a Saxon from a hang nail so he asked Alcock what they looked like and Alcock told him to never mind as he couldn't help from knowing 1 if he ever seen it so then Simon asked him where they was libel to be and Alcock told him probably over in some of the shell holes near the German trench.

That's what come off yesterday wile I was busy telling everybody about the little gal as you can bet I would of put Simon wise had I of been in on it and now Al he's gone and they don't nobody know what's became of him but they's a lot of us that's got a pretty good idear and as I say they's 2 or 3 feels pretty sick and one a specially. But I guess at that they don't no one feel no worse then me though they can't nobody say I am to blame for what's happened but still in all I might of interfered because I am the only 1 of them that has got a heart Al and the only reason Alcock and Brady is so sick now is that they are scared to death of what will happen to them if they get found out. Because their smartness won't get them nothing up in front of the Court Marshall as he has seen to many birds just like them.

Well Al I am on post duty tonight and maybe you don't know what that means. Well old pal

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its no Elks carnivle at no time and just think what it will be tonight with your ears straining for a cry from out there. And if the cry comes Al they won't only be the 1 thing to do and I will be the 1 to do it.

So this may be the last time you will hear from me old pal and I wanted you to know in the case anything come off just how it happened as I won't be here to write it to you afterwards.

All as I can think about now Al is 2 things and 1 of them is that little gal back home that won't never see her daddy but maybe when she gets 4 or 5 yrs. old she will ask her mother "Why haven't I got a daddy like other little girls?" But maybe she will have 1 by that time Al. But what I am thinking about the most is that poor ½ wit out there and as Brady says he isn't nothing but a Mormon any way and ought never to of got in the army but still and all he is a man and its our duty to fight and die for him if needs to be.

Your pal, JACK.

In the Hospital, July 20.

FRIEND AL: You will half to excuse this writeing as I am proped up in a funny position in bed and its all as I can do to keep the paper steady as my left arm ain't no more use then the Russian front.

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Well Al yesterday was the 1st. time they left me set up and I wrote a letter to Florrie and told her I was getting along O. K. as I didn't want she should worry and this time I will try and write to you. I suppose you got the note that the little nurse wrote for me about 2 wks. ago and told you I was getting better. Well old pal the gal that wrote you that little note is some baby and if you could see the kid that wrote you that little note you would wished you was laying here in my place. No I guess you wouldn't wished that Al as they's nobody that would want to go through what I have been through and they's very few that could stand it like I have and keep on smileing.

Well old pal they thought for a wile that it was Feeney for yrs. truly as they say over here and believe me I was in such pain that I would of been glad to die to get rid of the pain and the Dr. said it was a good thing I was such a game bird and had such a physic or I couldn't of never stood it. But I am not strong enough yet to set this way very long so if I am going to tell you what happened I had better start in.

Well Al this is the 20 of July and that means I have been in here 5 wks. as it was the 14 of June when all this come off. Well Al I can remember writeing to you the day of the night it come off and I guess I told you about this bird Simon getting lost that was always after the souvenirs and

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some of the boys told him they wasn't no Germans over in the other trenchs but just a bird name Motorcycle Mike that went up and down the section throwing flares so as we would think they was Germans over there. So they told him if he wanted to go out in Nobody's Land and spear souvenirs it was safe if you went just after Mike had made his rounds so as the snippers wouldn't get you.

Well old pal I was standing there looking out over Nobody's Land that night and I couldn't think of nothing only poor Simon and listening to hear if I couldn't maybe hear him call from somewheres out there and I don't know how long I had been standing there when I heard a kind of a noise like somebody scrunching and at the same time they was a flare throwed up from our side and I seen a figure out there cralling on the ground quite a ways beyond our wire. Well Al I didn't wait to look twice but I called Corp. Evans and told him. So he says who did I think it was and I said it must be Simon. So he says "Well Keefe its up to 1 of us to go get him." So I said "Well Corp. I guess its my job." So he says "All right Keefe if you feel that way about it." So I says all right and I'll say Al that he give up his claims without a struggle.

Well I started and I was going without my riffle but the Corp. stopped me and says take it along

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and I says "What for, do you think I am going to pick Simon up with a bayonet." So he says who told me it was Simon out there. Well Al that's the 1st. time I stopped to think it might maybe be somebody else.

Well Florrie use to say that I couldn't get up in the night for a drink of water without everybody in the bldg. thinking the world serious must of started but I bet I didn't knock over no chairs on this trip. Well Al it took me long enough to get out there as you can bet I wasn't trying for no record and every time they was a noise I had to lay flat and not buge. But I got there Al to where I thought I had saw this bird moveing around but they hadn't no rockets went up since I started and it was like a troop ship and I couldn't make out no figure of a man or nothing else and I was just going to whisper Simon's name when I reached out my hand and touched him. Well Al it wasn't Simon.

Well old pal we had some battle this bird and me and the both of us forgot bayonets and guns and everything else. I would of killed him sure only he got a hold of my left hand between his teeth and I couldn't pry it loose. But believe me Al he took a awful beating with my free hand and I will half to hand it to him for a game bird only what chance did he have? None Al and the battle couldn't only end the 1 way and I was just getting

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ready to grab his wind pipe and shut off the meter when he left go of my other hand and let out a yell that you could hear all over the great lakes and then all of a sudden it seemed like everybody was takeing a flash light and then the bullets come whizzing from all sides it seemed like and they got me 3 times Al and never pinked this other bird once. Well Al it wasn't till 2 wks. ago that I found out that my opponent was Johnny Alcock.

Just 2 wks. ago yesterday Johnny come in and seen me and told me the whole story and it was the 1st. day they left me see anybody only the Dr. and the little nurse and was the 1st. day Johnny was able to be up and around. How is that Al to put a man in the hospital for 3 wks. without useing no gun or knife or nothing on him only 1 bear fist. Some fist eh Al.

Well it seems like he had been worring so about Simon that he finely went out there snooping around all by himself looking for him and he was the 1 I seen when that flare went up and of course we each thought the other 1 was a German and finely it was him yelling and the rockets going up at the same time that drawed the fire and I got all of it because I was the bird on top.

But listen Al till you hear the funny part of it. Simple Simon the bird that we was both out there looking for him showed up in our trench about a ½ hr. after we was brought in and he showed up

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with a Saxon all right but the Saxon was dead. Well Al Simon told them that he had ran into this guy over near their wire and that he was alive when he got him, but Alcock says that Brady said Simon hadn't only been gone 24 hrs. and the Saxon had been gone a he—ll of a lot longer than that.

Well they's no hard feeling between Alcock and I and I guess I more then got even with him for eating out of my hand as they say but Johnny said it was a shame I couldn't of used some of my strength on a German instead of him but any way its all over now and the Dr. says my leg is pretty near O. K. and I can walk on it in a couple wks. but my left arm won't be no use for god knows how long and maybe never and I guess I'm lucky they didn't half to clip it off. So I don't know when I will get out of here or where I will go from here but I guess they's 1 little party that ain't in no hurry to see me go and I wished you could see her look at me Al and you would say its to bad I am a married man with 2 kids. Your pal,

JACK.

Somwheres in France, Aug. 16.

FRIEND AL: Well Al I don't suppose this will reach you any sooner then if I took it with me and mailed it when I get home but I haven't

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And I wished you could see her look at me, Al

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nothing to do for a few hrs. so I might as well be writeing you the news.

Well old pal I am homewards bound as they say as the war is Feeney as far as I am conserned and I am sailing tonight along with a lot of the other boys that's being sent home for good and when I look at some of the rest of them I guess I am lucky to be in as good a shape as I am. I am O. K. only for my arm and wile it won't never be as good as it was I can probably get to use it pretty good in a few months and all as I can say is thank god it is my left arm and not the old souper that use to stand Cobb and them on their head and it will stand them on their head again Al as soon as this war is over and I guess I won't half to go begging to Comiskey to give me another chance after what I have done as even if I couldn't pitch up a alley I would be a money maker for them just setting on the bench and showing myself after this.

Well we are saying good by to old France and I don't know how the rest of the boys feels but I am not haveing no trouble controling myself and when it comes down to cases Al the shoe is on the other ft. and what I am getting at is that France ought to be the 1 that hates to see us leave as I doubt if they will ever get a bunch of spenders like us over here again.

Well Al it certainly seems quite down here in

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this old sea port town after what we have been through and it seems like I can still hear them big guns roar and them riffles crack and etc. and I feel like I ought to keep my head down all the wile and keep out of the snippers way and I could all most shut my eyes and imagine I was back there again in that he—ll hole but I know I'm not Al as I don't itch.

Well Al my wounds isn't the only reason I am comeing home but they's another reason and that is that they want some of us poplar idles to help rouse up the public on this here next Liberty Loan and I don't mind it as they have promised to send me home to Chi and I can be with Florrie and the kids. I will do what I can Al though I can't figure where the public would need any rouseing up and they certainly wouldn't if they had of been through what I have been through and maybe some of the other boys to. It takes jack to run a war Al even if us boys don't get none of it or what we do get they either send it home to our wife or take it away from us in a crap game.

Well old pal I left the hospital the day before yesterday and that was the only time I felt like crying since they told me I was going home and it wasn't so much for myself Al but that poor little nurse and you would of felt like crying to if you could of seen the look she give me. Her name is Charlotte Warren and she lives in Minneapolis and

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expects to go right back there after she is through over here but that don't do me no good as a married man with a couple children has got something better to do besides flirting with a pretty little nurse and besides I won't never pitch ball in Minneapolis as I expect to quit the game when I am about 40.

Well Al some of the boys wants to say their farewells to the Vin Rouge and the la la las and I will half to close and I will write again as soon as I get home and tell you what the baby gal looks like though they's only the 1 way she could look and that's good.

Well here is good by to France and good luck to all the boys that's going to stay over here and Simple Simon with the rest of them and I suppose I ought to of got a few souvenirs off him to bring home with me. But I guess at that I will be carrying a souvenir of this war for a long wile Al and its better than any of them foney ones he has got as the 1 I have got shows I was realy in it and done my bit for old Glory and the U. S. A.

Your pal, JACK.

Chicago, Aug. 29.

FRIEND AL: Well Al here I am back in old Chi and feeling pretty good only for my arm and my left leg is still stiff yet and I caught a mean cold comeing across the old pond but what is

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a few little things like that as the main thing is being home.

Well old pal they wasn't nothing happened on the trip across the old pond only it took a whole lot to long and believe me old N. Y. looked good but believe me I wouldn't waist no time in N. Y. only long enough to climb outside a big steak and the waiter had to cut it up for me but even the waiters treated us fine and everywheres we showed up the people was wild about us and cheered and clapped and it sounded like old times when I use to walk out there to warm up.

Well we hit N. Y. in the A. M. and left that night and got here last eve. and I didn't leave Florrie know just when I was comeing as I wanted to supprise her. Well Al I ought to of wired ahead and told her to go easy on my poor old arm because when she opened the door and seen me she give a running hop step and jump and dam near killed me. So then she seen my arm in a sling and cried and cried and she says "Oh my poor boy what have you been through." So I says "Well you have been through something yourself so its 50 50 only I got this from a German."

Well Al little Al was the cutest thing you ever seen and he grabbed me by the good hand and rushed me in to where the little stranger was laying and she was asleep but we broke the rules for once and all and all it was some party and she is some

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little gal Al and pretty as a picture and when you can say that for a 3 mos. old its going some as the most of them looks like a French breakfast.

Well I finely happened to think of Sister Marie and I asked where she was at and Florrie says she went back to Texas so I says tough luck and Florrie says I needn't get so gay the 1st. evening home and she says "Any way we have still got a Marie in the house as that is what I call the baby." So I says "Well you can think of her that way but her name ain't going to be that as I don't like the name." So she says what name did I like and I pretended like I was thinking a wile and finely I says what is the matter with Charlotte. Well Al you will half to hand it to the women for detectives as I hadn't no sooner said the name when she says "Oh no you can't come home and name my baby after none of your French nurses." And I hadn't told her nothing about a nurse.

Well any way I says I had met a whole lot more Maries then Charlottes in France and she says had I met any Florries and I said no and that was realy the name I had picked out for the kid. So she says well she didn't like the name herself but it was the only name I could pick out that she wouldn't be suspicious of it so the little gal is named after her mother Al and if she only grows up ½ as pretty as her old lady it won't make no differents if she has got a funny name.

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Well Al have you noticed what direction the Dutchmens is makeing their drive in now? They started going the other way the 18 of July and it was 2 days ahead of that time that our regt. was moved over to the war and now they are running them ragged. Well Al I wished I was there to help but even if I was worth a dam to fight I couldn't very well leave home just now.

Your pal, JACK.

THE END

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